INTRODUCTION

Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

And unto Adam he said, Because thou has hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

I. In the Beginning

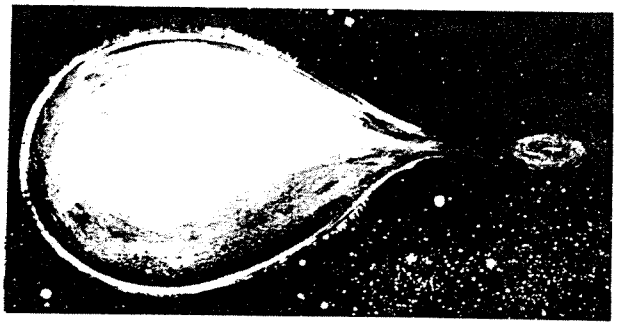
Capital is the process of transforming human energy into work: creating work for the purpose of creating yet more work. For this process to be the human who works must first of all see no escape to the fate of being a *worker* except the usually illusory "option" of becoming an exploiter. But forcing someone to become a worker is a continuous and continuously perilous task. Capital must not only create the worker--itself a paradox--but must also create the *proper* worker and the correct *mix* of types of labor power with past-dead labor in a hierarchy of wage divisions so as to guarantee the accumulation of work.

From conception to birth, through school, children must be "socialized" and "educated" into becoming "productive": a good worker. Mama, father, the school, the "Future" all *must* combine to create the correct mix of death and life. Once labor power in its multifold forms is created, it must be fused--but kept divided in its embodiments--at each workpoint throughout the system in proportions that end up as profit.

Everywhere, the system is resisted. The children rebel, the mothers rebel, the teachers and foremen tire, while the end products of decades of discipline revolt themselves, strike, demand more money, become unproductive and dangerous to the dead labor around them. This has happened again and again, but thus far the system metamorphosizes and goes on. How?

It is obvious that our work is capital's motor and as we recreate ourselves as workers through our work we recreate our divisions and weakness. What should be obvious--but is not--is that our *struggles against capital* are its only motors for development. This is not a picture of some pure defeat in which the harder we struggle the more we perfect capital's dominion; rather, the struggles that develop in one mix of living and dead labor, in one social arrangement of exploitation, force that *specific* arrangement to collapse. A crisis ensues. In the labyrinth of the crisis, capital can only find its way by following the working class and trying to devour it at the exit. For the capitalist relationship to continue, a new social arrangement, a new mix of variable and constant capital must be organized. But this *newness* can only come from the revolt itself.

This is the irony of struggle: at the very nodal point it creates, an Apocalypse appears that seems to make exit impossible, chills the blood, hesitates action and demand, making further struggle seem futile, and suicidal.



II. "Apocalypse Decoded" Decoded

And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.
And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?
And no man in heaven, nor earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.
And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

The Work/Energy Crisis and the Apocalypse (MIDNIGHT NOTES, vol. 2, n.1) explored in detail the collapse of "Keynesianism" brought on by the struggles of various sectors of the working class living at the core of the arrangement: the mass factory worker and the housewife. This struggle came in many colors, e.g., Detroit's League of Revolutionary Black Workers as well as the West Virginia wildcat miners, the black welfare women's movement as well as the W.I.T.C.H.s. This collapse of Keynseanism was immediately interpreted by capital as a dramatic decline in the rate of profit.

In 1973, capital transformed its "crisis of profitability" into a problem of Nature and Arabs: "There is too little energy and what there is, the Arabs have," they cried. But the real mechanism of the "energy crisis" was that the oil, coal and uranium price increases were designed on the one side to fragment anew the too-homogenous working class (in the U.S.) and to reassert a pronounced hierarchy of wages and labor power. The very existence of the Reagan Administration is one proof that this part of the strategy has had some success. On the other side, it was a strategy to ensure a re-structuring of accumulation: concentration of constant capital at a higher level (e.g., nukes and computers), elimination of the "middle" (e.g., robotization of the auto plants) and a vast expansion of the low-waged service and clerical sector. Such a strategy can ironically answer women's demands for income apart from the husband's while simultaneously increasing the over-all social quantity of work so as to pay (create the value and surplus value) for the leap in "high tech" development. The two poles--high tech and low-waged service sectors--apparently so distant capitalistically require each other. What unites them is capital's need to create work in one part of society and transform it to another in order to ensure accumulation.

In the "Apocalypse" we began an exploration of the developing shape of the working class. Capital seeks to transform energy into "useful work" on a system-wide basis while stablizing a given cycle of exploitation. We examined four sectors and transformations within them during the last decade: the factory; housework and the service sector; information and knowledge control; policing, repression and waste removal. These sectors cut across sex and race/nationality lines to some extent, but largely reproduce a hierarchy of those divisions in the new wage structure which once again widen and becomes increasingly dispersed. Each sector poses different riddles:

Production

The new factory will be robotized with fewer workers; the old line worker is dying but the labor power that remains works admidst ever higher accumulations of constant capital. Should these workers get out of control, they pose an ever higher degree of danger for a capital in hostage. What is the price capital must pay to keep these workers "in line"? What social relations on and off the job can keep them working?

Reproduction

How will labor power be produced and reproduced--capital's most dangerous problem--and who will do it? Will the population become increasingly black, hispanic and immigrant? How can "good" labor power be assured in the new model? Will the women in the service sector settle for shit wages? Can a purely monetarized reproduction system for high tech workers work? And how can capital turn it all into a profit to pay for the high tech accumulation of dead labor?

Information

Who will sort out the information sorters? Can dysinformation interfere with capital's need for faster information processing? Can workers be trusted with all the newly concentrated constant capital? How vulnerable is this constant capital physically? What price will capital have to pay to keep it safe, and at that price can it be profitable?

Elimination

The problems of eliminating capital's variable and constant shit: the "troublemakers" (criminals, marginals, hustlers, delinquents, terrorists, etc.) and the highly lethal wastes of the high organic composition technology. The dumps--prisons and waste-sites-- are "necessary" for capitalist reproduction but no one wants to live next to one. Can the waste be controlled and eliminated or will it find a way to seep out and hold the system hostage? At what price (and in what form) can it be stabilized and isolated, if at all? Will those who must absorb the shit continue to do so, or will they explode as in Love Canal and the New Mexico State Prison?

The Reagan Administration's policies attempt to answer the Sphinx's riddles: who will leap off the cliff?

III. Reagan's Number: 666

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:
And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.
Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

Budget cuts/tax cuts are the blades of a scissor: what are they trying to cut, divide, sever?

The edge of the budget cuts is to most directly cut the whole sector of the working class that has attempted to live outside of the traditional schema of reproduction--the full time Man--without the traditional form of work-income relation--the "full time job". The black-lesbian-welfare-mother and the post-hippy-CETA-brother are to be killed as historical types.

The tax cuts are sharpened for the "good" full time, responsible workers in two-income units with highly monetarized reproduction systems. Their real income will increase while the income of the others will fall thus increasing the gap between them: the costs of "dropping out" are increased while the "dropped out" are squeezed back to a career, to a husband, to prison or the army.

These gaps are crucial, for capital has learned that though massive wagecollapse can elicit insurrectional responses so also can too high an average wage. The capitalist growth path is always poised on an instability and catastrophe. On the one side is the abyss of "price-wage" riots that have pervaded capitalist history from the days of the "Price Revolution" in the 1500's to Levittown in 1979; and on the other side are the rebellions of idleness, of violent disgust with discipline, of the ecstatic revulsion with work. For the class struggle always has two components: one looking back to "past standards" and the other to a post-capitalist universe. That is why these struggles put forth a peculiar combination of appeals to the most archaic, almost neanderthal needs and to almost ineffable utopian desires.

It is absolutely crucial for these two extremes of the working class never to meet in order for this capitalist strategy to work. For what is crucial is not only that more and more disciplined white children are produced but also that the high-tech workers will not be able to escape their work and find in the struggles of the wage bottom a common possibility, a meeting of need and desire.

To see the attack the Reagan Administration directs against the highly articulated strands of demand and struggle of the last fifteen years, consider the matrix below. It summarizes the elements of the Profit Restoration State: the reduction of the costs of reproducing the working class, the reduction of the entropy of the production cycle by the intensification of information and detection instrumentalities, the expulsion of entropically dense bio-social wastes; the creating of more efficient mechanisms for the transformation of the surplus produced in the low organic composition sector into the "high tech" industries.

With this matrix the Reagan Administration will attempt to transform the state of class relation from precarious to controlable.

It is important to refuse, however, the confortable view of some that the Administration has two separable sides: the hard-core rightwingers (Moral Majority, KKK, Jesse Helms) and the "modernizing right" (corporation execs, CIA, Koch), because they are absolutely essential to each other--and they know it. One is the "tough cop" who with police and para-military powers of violence attempts to control the low organic composition workers while the "modernizing right" is the "nice guy" (the "reasonable" capitalist) who simply states that "everything is permitted...if you have the cash". One is the "irrational" fundamentalist preacher tapping his bible with a shotgun the other is the "cool" corporate climber who will listen to "reason" and wink when you go snort coke in the toilet. But are they so different, are they divisible?

Consider the way these forces attempt to manipulate the gay movement. On the one side the Moral Majority types are calling for capital punishment for faggots while the Reagan Administration is simply saying: "Go fuck in the closet, or if you have the money you can go to Morocco, we don't really care. But don't fool with the children and don't, we warn you, don't be so flagrant!" So

FUNCTION	*AIM*	*PROGRAM*
Production	Increase pool of low organic composition labor, intensify the profit magnetism of the "high tech" industry.	Increased military budget, space shuttle, immigration regulation, robotization and computerization of factory and office, attack on minimum wage, free enterprise zones, the end of CETA.
Reproduction	Reduce the costs of reproduction, disaggregate the working class socially and geographically, increase the pressure on "deviants" to get back into the closet, increase the production of white children and the sterilization of black/hispanic women and men, make longevity through high tech medicine possible but expensive.	Family Protection Act that simultaneously "outlaws" homosexuality and rewards high waged white workers to make children, "free market" housing driving blacks to the suburbs, "tax squeeze" on localities, direct and indirect aid religious schools, welfare cuts, anti-abortion laws, attack on contraceptive availability, reduction of medicaid, "high tech" medical research funded, genetic engineering and fertility research funded.
Information	Reduce and control workers in "high tech" sectors, intensify police functions, make the circulation process more efficient and crime proof, intensify ideological control on mass media while fragmenting specialized media.	Tax cuts for capital investments, revival of federal inquisitional committees, registration for the draft, FBI and CIA deregulated, tax cuts to make part of the underground economy to surface.
Waste Expulsion	Expulsion of human and biosocial "impurities", crime control, control of foreign nations.	Capital punishment, new prison construction, end of OSHA, new criminal code, deregulation of the nuclear and chemical industry, militarization, "partial" nuclear war.

in fear of the bible pounding red necks the gay movement is supposed to be forced into a compromise with the more "reasonable" types. This predicament is not unique to gays. This is the model for the political mechanics of the period, for it is important to remember that the carrot would be entirely unappealing to the horse if it were not yoked and continuously whipped on the ass: if it were free, the meadow grass would be more succulent than their dried up tuber.

Capital is neither more nor less "rational", it simply knows that it must simultaneously develop and repress, use violence and compromise, kill and fructify; indeed, it cannot develop without repressing, it cannot compromise without a violent threat, and it cannot kill unless it creates. Thus the two parts of the Administration cannot fundamentally divide. So our political response cannot be dictated by any attempt to "divide" the "reasonable" from the "crazy" capitalists, for as an examination of this Reagan matrix shows, the long-term transformation of society it reveals demonstrates the apocalyptic tendencies of capital's equilibrium path: "partial" nuclear war, "reasonable" atomic power, sterilization for "the poor who can't afford babies anyway", intensified racial repression, queer bashing on a grand scale, etc. Are we to debate with this?

IV. From Social Democracy to the Detection State

And Abraham drew near and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?
Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are within?
That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

It is popular now to describe the Reagan Administration as the "end of social democracy", however this is inaccurate. At best it can be seen as an important moment in a process that had its beginning in the struggles of blacks, women and youth in the last part of the 60's to simultaneously *extend* the social contract beyond the fully waged worker and *subvert* it. They were going beyond the "democracy" on which social democracy was based.

For "democracy" in bourgeois society has always been defined in relation to property, i.e., capital. Roughly, the first period of capitalist democracy which ran from the rise of the system to the early part of the 19th century recognized the political person as one who "embodied" *constant capital*. The history of this period can been seen in terms of the slow widening of the notion of property from land to, eventually, money-capital. But a second form of capitalist democracy began to form when there was an expansion of "political rights" from *constant* to *variable capital* in the 19th century. The wage contract became the basic criterion for whether you were or were not a part of the state, whether you had "rights as well as duties" (to put it in the proper bourgeois cant phrase). The crucial question was whether your labor power was indeed a commodity, not only in a formal sense, but whether it was *actually reproducible* and *reliable*. As the complex history of blacks in the U.S. shows, this development is by no means one-directional. Thus black suffrage is directly determined by their wage relation and that part of black history is extremely volitile. Social democracy can be defined formally, then, as the state that incorporates the representation of variable capital--the reliable and responsible workers, the "loyal opposition" of the industrious working class.

The late 60's saw "marginal elements" (though the absolute majority of the population) attempting to force capital beyond the exchange of "rights" for "duties"--work. Those who had no traditional, fixed relationship to the wage either because of age, sex or race demanded "rights" or "entitlements" independent of *immediate productivity*. This was most clearly seen not in the various efforts to extend the vote (the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the 18 year old suffrage, etc.) but in the gradual transformation of countercyclical Keynsean mechanisms like food stamps, unemployment insurance, and welfare into a package of entitlements that seemed to point to a guarantee of survival independent of paid work. This struggle *to be guaranteed without guaranteeing* could be seen as a generalization of as well as a subversion of the "full employment" social contract.

The budget cuts simply state that the "working class solution" to the transcendence of social democracy is completely unacceptable. As Stockman said, "There are no entitlements." But what is "capital's solution"? Is it the end of state action in the economy, a return to "free market society", a devaluation of Keynes and a revaluation of Smith? Not exactly. For though Reagan promises to take the state *out* of our lives he certainly is not planning to take our lives out of the state.

Let us consider the tendency of the state in this period briefly in relation to immigration. The surge of legal and illegal immigration has been an important element in capital's response to the collapse of the birth rate in the U.S. and the increasing refusal of native-born people to do "shit" work, but on the other side it as been a way for many in the Hispanic and Asian working class to increase their relative wages. But for all its functionality, immigration is now looked upon with apprehension and a debate rages on it. But what is the problem? It is the problem of knowledge. The problem is not numbers per se but knowing who and where the numbers are.

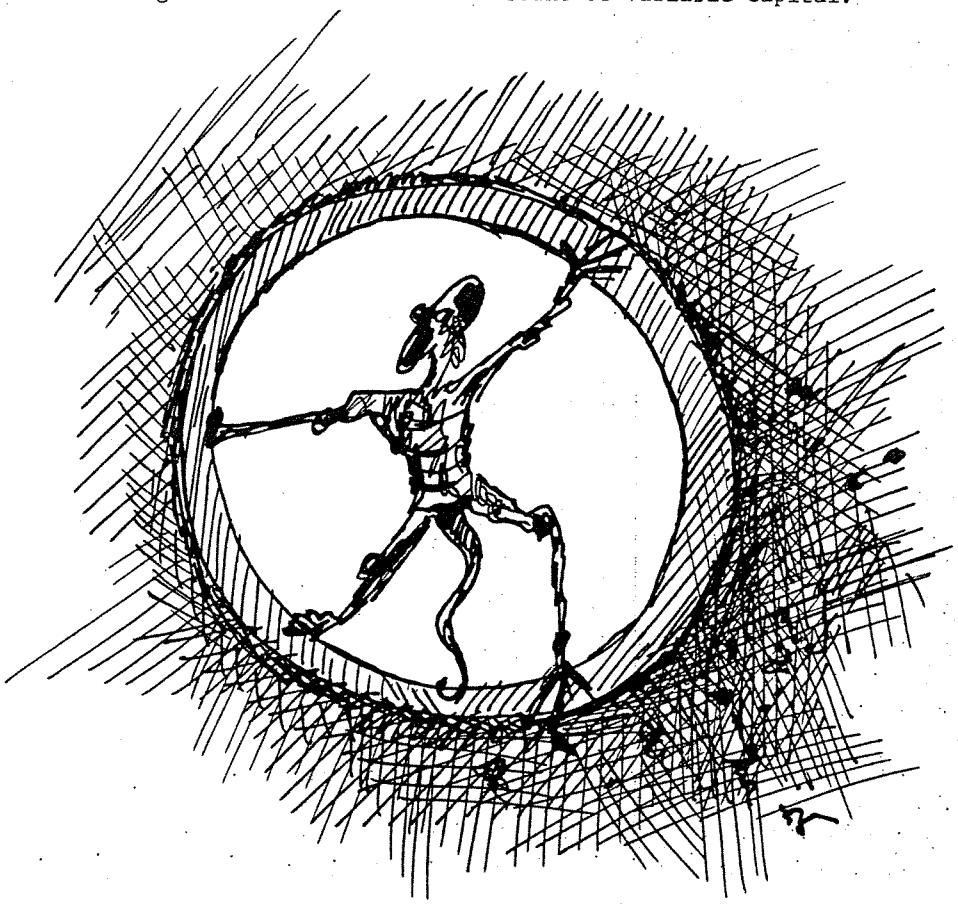
The state is increasingly refusing to assist in mediating the relation between the new immigrants and the economic system. Thus, for example, the program

set up for the refugees from Cuba, Vietnam and Haiti in 1980 is explicitly organized to discourage the development of any system of state social services for them. It is to be done through private or charitable organization. But this does not mean that the state disappears. It merely takes on a new role: the detector. For the job of the bureaucrats assigned to this program is not to intervene on behalf of these refugees but merely to chart their moves in their journey into the economy.

Indeed, the formal debate on immigration in general is on epistemological questions and not on social service ones. What worries capital is not whether these people are exploitable or not, for they clearly are. The problem is their "underground" status. Thus the solutions to the immigration crisis is not the increase or decrease of the immigrants' flow but rather center on "identity cards" and "amnesty" for illegal aliens. Both these methods are designed to bring the aliens to the surface, even though they would be costly both politically and financially.

Why can't they continue the noumenal status of the illegal aliens? Because of the very imperatives coming from the new relation of the state to the economy. State intervention now is to be one of perturbations, i.e., marginal accelerations or decelerations. It plans to use market forces to come to desired state aims instead of literally attempting to carry out its policy in its own name. But this perturbational approach requires alot more information about the market elements and players. This is the state's maxim for this period: *the less you do the more you need to know.* This is especially true of the labor market, and so the existance of perhaps ten million unregistered workers could completely thwart the type of strategy that the Reagan state requires. Thus in going out of social democracy capital must go to a detection state.

The state need not decrease in size at all in the long run, but its functional composition will be different. So the police functions must be intensified not only in the sense of creating new means of violence production but also in the instrumentalities of detection. The social democratic state required too much presence, the state in the future will attempt to disappear behind a one-way mirror. For it now has an absolute need to register all movement: be it movements of people or money, constant or variable capital.



V. Back to Vomit?

And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.
And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.
And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

As capital attempts to go beyond the social democratic state we are confronted with some crucial political choices. On the one side there is an inevitable urge to attempt to conserve the "gains" of the past century of struggle--the social wage; the elementary "rights" on the job; the minimal protection, on a legal level, of the autonomy of women, black and hispanic people and gays--but on the other side there is an equally compelling drive to use this period of transition and re-organization of the class relation to make a qualitative leap in the power of the working class against capital.

These two elements of defense and aggression are not contradictory however. They potentiate each other because the very attempt of capital to renege on the "social contract" hammered out over a century will have profoundly destablizing effects on all aspects of production and reproduction. For the mere *defense* of "outworn" or "established" demands reproposes the crisis on a higher level of social tension since it meets a capitalist strategy that is attempting to take the initiative to overcome the limits of accumulation imposed by the struggle since the middle 60's. There is no mystery in the forms of defense against the planned and profound devaluation of the working class. As to their success? Who can tell now?

All we can say is that *if* this defense is *not* successful then much more discussion would be academic since the apocalyptic consequences of a new capitalist "stablization" are obvious. Although workers undoubtedly struggled in the death camps it did not make much sense to talk about a working class strategy in such a situation: "metaphysics", "suicide", "cynicism", and "courage" are more appropriate categories at such a level of working class division and defeat. (Although there were probably many Marxist theoreticians who could analyze the capitalist functionality and rationality of Auschwitz among the vapors.)

Given the progressive deterioration of the capitalist initiative, it is evident that to *settle* for the demands that have their roots in social democracy (however vigorously fought for) would merely be going "back to the vomit". Such demands can only be effective in starting the process of a counter-attack simply because the very sectors of the class that were most central in destablizing and going beyond social democracy would still be there if the new Reagan initiative fails. There with a vengeance and an agenda. What will it be?

At this point, the editors of *Midnight Notes* address you, the reader, to a set of themes we hope will be crucial at the juncture we envision. These themes have their roots in the beginning of capitalism, in the initial confrontations of proletariat and capital. We print the following long excerpt from an unpublished work of a Midnight friend to stimulate our collective memories and anticipations.

"The formation of the proletariat is strictly related to the capitalist attempt to *lengthen and radically transform the working day*. In fact the transition to the new mode of production could not obtain without the introduction of a *continuity* and *regularity* in the expenditure of labor whose absence appears as one of the most typical features of the medieval organization of work. Suffice to think of the great number of *holidays* that cancelled one third of the work year as well as the prevailingly seasonal character of work whose immediate consequence was that moments of great intensity of work were alternated with long periods of idleness and that the work day was not *uniform* but more or less long depending on the type of work to be performed. To the irregularity of work habits contributed also in a determining fashion the low development of the division of labor and the lack of any separation between production and reproduction. This meant that not only one performed many different types of work and easily switched from one work to another (from agriculture to artisanal to hunting etc.) but equally easily one alternated work and leisure in a *spatial and temporal continuum*. Against these practices, the first task required of the nascent capitalist class was the

regularization of the work process. To force the proletariat to work throughout the day and every day: this is the first enterprise that capital must face, an enterprise which will require a battle of at least two centuries before having some guarantee of success. For only a complete inversion of social relations and first of all a radical change in the personality-identity of the individual could lead in this direction. The first social 'given' capital had to revolutionize was the very attitude towards work that throughout the Middle Ages had been assumed as pure *negativity*, mortification of the flesh."

There were a variety of attacks on the proletariat designed to change this attitude towards work. Protestantism arises as the most characteristic religious expression of capital's need:

"With Protestantism, particularly in its radical wing, *work is posited as the new religion*. It is not just the most important thing, the very essence of life, the road towards salvation, but *it is by itself religious practice, service of God....* this exaltation and sanctification of work does not remain an ideological fact, a question of principle but has an immediate practical translation into a number of processes whose common aim is the lengthening of the working day. In pursuing this aim capital moves in two directions: on the one side it *represses* all those activities and attitudes that appear unproductive, on the other it *develops new capacities* beginning with the capacity to work. Repression and development go hand in hand, one is the condition of the other. This must be emphasized because too often one only sees the destructive tendencies of capital or, in an apologetic mode, capital is seen as "liberating" an already existing potential at the level of the productive forces. In both cases, one does not see that the destruction of precapitalist elements in the proletariat is functional to the development of new capacities, and, vice versa, that *development is the other face of repression*. The development of the productive forces, beginning with labor power, which is the first and most essential productive force capital develops, is not a bringing to the surface of something that already exists, but it is a form of development that can obtain *only when something else has already been destroyed*. We can accept Marx's formulation--capital develops the productive forces by breaking the 'fetters' of the feudal mode of production--only if we recognize that to break these 'fetters' meant to break the resistance of the proletariat to a more intensive exploitation and to erase first of all those attitudes and faculties that supported this resistance.

The wave of legislation that from the middle of the sixteenth century began to regulate the work process and more generally the social relations of work was crucial to the 'liberation' of labor power. The initiative starts with the Protestant countries where the religious calendar is reorganized and numerous festivities are abolished. Also, the same day of rest equal for everybody is imposed and those activities that undermined work discipline are forbidden. The regimentation of the time of rest and the relation between work and restis a central aspect of the new organization of work. The first phase of this process is characterized by the separation between production and reproduction and the systematic underdevelopment of the reproductive moment for the purpose of developing production. What follows from this separation is that *only the time filled with work has value and that the time of work and the time of rest are increasingly regimented into opposite spaces*. The very notion of rest and leisure is changed so that rest is viewed more as idleness than as individual consumption and reproduction. Consequently, rest is redimensioned and reduced. Finally, to the extent that work is now the leading concept, rest is subordinated to it in the sense that it must be *rest for work*, i.e., it must be expended productively to facilitate the reintegration and restoration of productive capacities."

"In play, capital privileges *usefulness against pleasure*: playing must serve to rest the spirit or exercise the body. Play must be congenial to the productive activities and contribute to restore and develop them or else. On the contrary, *drunkeness* and *idleness* become true crimes. The Puritan would lament that the proletarian considers Sunday a day of revelry and spent it shamelessly drinking and carousing at the alehouse, playing dice or making love. A particularly strong attack is waged against the *dances around the maypole* and against the *maypole itself*, both because of its phallic implications and because increasingly it becomes the symbol of proletarian autonomy and resistance to the new work discipline. In fact, it was around the maypole that since

the Middle Ages the games of May were celebrated which were true sexual festivals welcoming the coming of the spring. The maypole was also the center of the famous 'morris dances' where one danced in circles, *das a das* (back to back) holding each other through ribbons descending from its top. Repeatedly in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries local authorities, particularly among the Puritans, forbid both the maypole and the may games which were accused of always producing a crop of 'bastards'. But the deepest reason is that in the maypole and these spring celebrations some of the most visible manifestations of precapitalist sexuality are attacked and in their abolition crushed. (Not accidently, in England at least the campaign against the maypole is closely tied to the persecution of the witches)."

"The separation of production and reproduction imposes also the temporal and spatial separation of work and rest and the elimination of every element of sexuality from production work. Or better, sexuality is channelled into two forms of work: in the former it disappears as sexuality qua pleasure-power and is sublimated into labor power; in the latter it is conserved as sexuality but it is itself transformed into a productive process, in so far as it is functionalized to the reproduction of labor power. The leap operated by these two processes can be concretely measured if we think, e.g., to what becomes of the kitchen in capitalism which in the Middle Ages was proverbial for its sexual licence."

"The resistance of the proletariat to the imposition of wage discipline was very vigorous on many fronts. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the bosses continuously complain that the workers arrive late to work, take long breaks and leave as soon as possible. It is important to remember that wage work was considered a true form of slavery, so much so that the Levellers excluded wage workers from suffrage because they considered them "unfree". The proletarian hatred of wage labor is such that Winstanley, the leader of the Diggers, will declare that it doesn't make any difference whether you live under a foreign enemy or under your own brother if you work for a wage. His words are echoed by a character in a work by Spenser (*Mother Hubbard's Tale*) who asks: 'Why should a free person make oneself a slave?' The refusal of work and the struggle for its reduction accompanies incessantly the history of the proletariat from its inception. Thus, in the utopian visions which flourish during the Civil War in England returns the promise that 'there will be no need to work.' 'Food grows everywhere,' writes Bishop Godwin in *The Man in the Moon*, 'clothes, houses, everything we wish can be obtained without work or so little that it is as if one played.' In his *Utopia* Thomas More already had proposed *six hours of work a day*, Campanella *four*, and Winstanley had proposed that people should work only until fourty. If the proletarian utopia of the time was the absence of work, the proletarian practice must not have been very different. In a satire written in 1639 we read: 'Monday is the brother of Sunday, Tuesday another one, Wednesday you must go to church to pay, Thursday is half holiday, Friday is too late to start spinning, Saturday is again half holiday.' A typical small entrepreneur of the time, John Houghton, complains in 1681 that the proletarians alternate moments and days of intense work with periods of idleness; moreover *they* want to decide their own work days and all of them worship Saint Monday."

"The capitalist response to this refusal of work was continuous wage cuts intended to incentivize the required work discipline. But still in the nineteenth century the proletarian 'disgust' towards daily work will represent an endemic, permanent crisis for capital. So much that for a long time it will be debated whether it is preferable to have a work force *regularly employed and regularly waged* or whether it is not more convenient to hire workers just for specific tasks. Only in the nineteenth century will it be definitely decided in favor of weekly waged labor. It is true however that still at this time in many areas of England Saint Monday was observed and also for French workers, 'Sunday is the day of the family and Monday that of friends.' Only women and children, it seems, went to work on Monday; but there was an atmosphere of holiday and they went home earlier."

This sketch of four hundred years of working class struggle clearly shows a continuity in the elements of a type of society that the proletariat has autonomously fought for and what capital fought against. It has a simple spatio-temporal character: the reduction of work-time, the increase of anti-work space and the reappropriation of social wealth. However, the utopian visions of the earliest proletarian revolts put our present reality to shame. Here, at the end of

the twentieth century we have not even tested the four-hour day and "retirement" at fourty, much less gone further. Even Mr. Lenin himself proposed a halving of the work day and a doubling of wages as the only sensible program for the U.S. working class in 1906. Such a program would be called utopian in sneers by most Leninists of today! Indeed, capital is putting more work on the agenda, for if the Reagan matrix succeeds our work-day and work-life will quantitatively *increase*.

Both the Left *and* the Right agree in principle but not in detail: the demand is for work. But it was exactly the anti-systemic demands for the dramatic reduction of work and the opening up of space for pleasure and autonomous desire that was the most volitle and destablizing force of the late 60's and early 70's whether expressed by blacks, women or youth movements. These demands have quite systematically been repressed in the crisis but they will form the basis of the second stage of the working class response to Reagan state matrix.

Our problem at this point is not so much the mechanics of agitation and revolution. They have become common mass knowledge and revolutionary examples abound in this century. Thus even in the last three years there have been three successful revolutions in Nicaragua, Zimbabwe and Iran which were widely covered in the media. Their results might have been questionable but the tactics of revolt are no mystery to any T.V. viewer. The tactics of agitation are even more widespread. I believe you can hire community organizers at the wage of dishwashers. If anything we are awash in expertise. What we lack is an agenda that would give new sense to the basic drive of class struggle, a vision of social life without work. Our crucial need is the development of a project that would concretely answer the following questions:

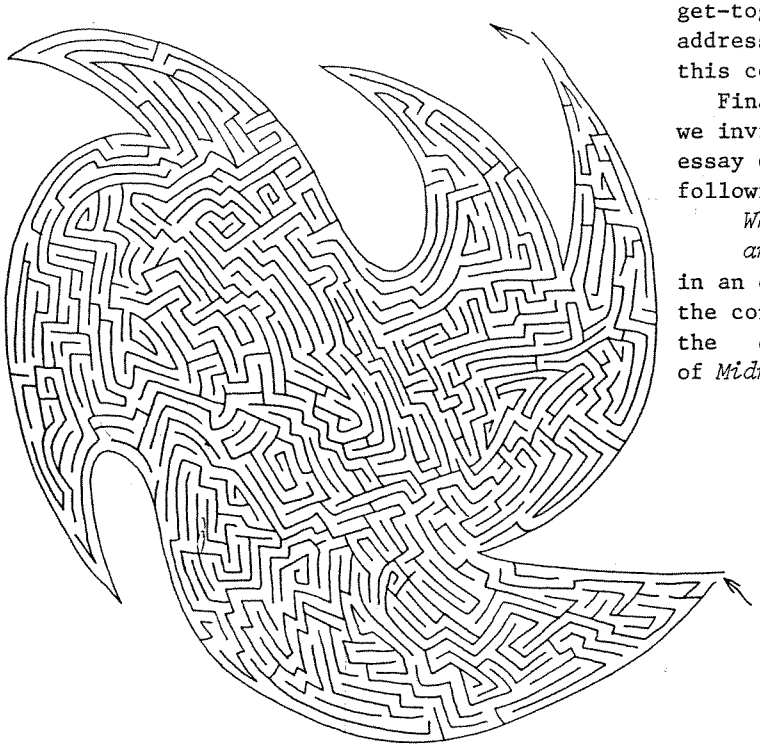
--What is the elimination of work-time and work-space?
--What kind of society could be created on the basis of a dramatic reduction of work-time and work-space?
--What are the empirical possibilities, both technological and political, for the realization of such a society now?

To answer our need we are planning to hold a conference in the Spring of 1982 in the Boston area to discuss these questions and take some practical steps in making more public the debate, not about the importance of work which both the Right and Left seem obsessed with, but rather on *the importance of the elimination of work*. Any one who would like to contribute to the shape and content of this get-together should contact us at our mailing address. We will announce further details about this conference in our next issue.

Finally, in preparation of the conference we invite any of our readers to enter a prize essay competition. Anyone who can answer the following question:

Why do we continue to put up with work and exploitation?

in an essay of 3000 words or less should enter the contest. The winner will recieve $100 and the essay will be printed in the Fall issue of *Midnight Notes*.



Back
No More
To Our Vomit

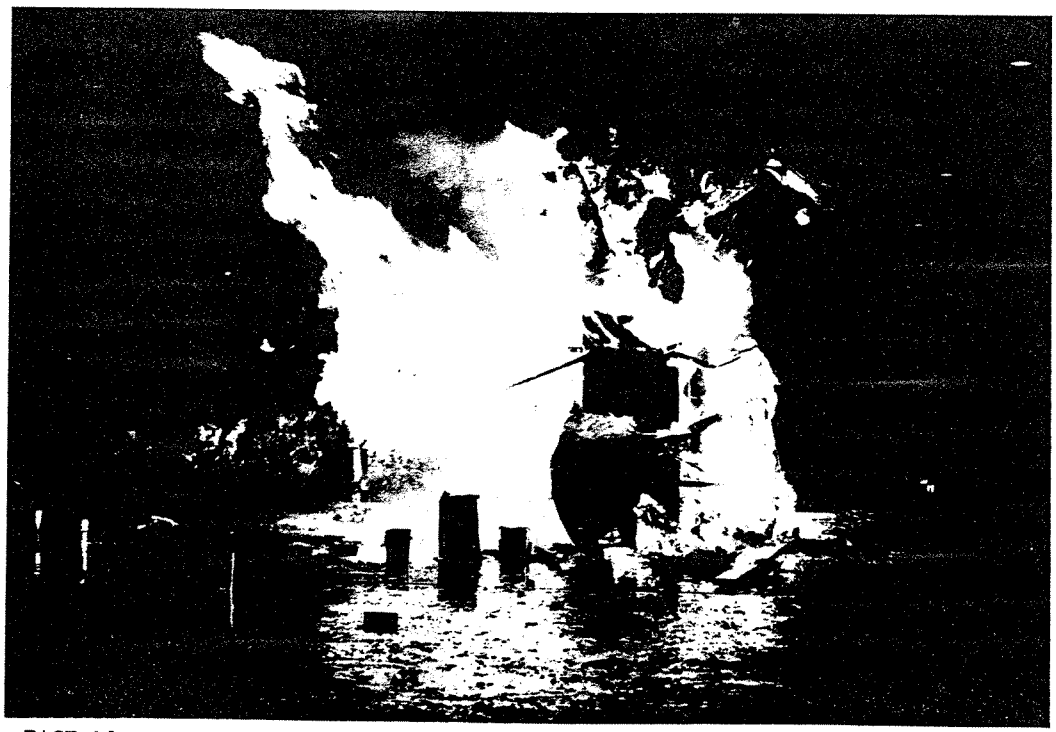
CANARY IN A COOLING TOWER

being nailed to your perch
isn't what i call
living

Fire and Ice:
Space Wars in Zurich

The following interview was made in April 1981. The interviewee is a man from Zurich who has been involved in the Swiss anti-work movement for some time before it became "a focus of international attention." He might not be typical since this movement has been known for its suspicion of language--its demonstrations are usually banner-less--while he is quite articulate . But he's been there.

This interview is largely self-contained and discusses the Zurich events from the Spring of 1980 to April 1981. However, for a little background we quote an excerpt from an article on the Zurich movement in a French journal *Gueule Hebdomadaire* (address: 27 rue J.P. Timbaud, 75011 Paris, France) printed in November 1980: "Swiss social life rests on a very strict labor code where all the possibilities of conflict are absorbed before they can develop. Strikes are very rare and in many sectors they are judged unconstitutional. Absenteeism is severely attacked. Switzerland is the country in Europe which has *the longest work week*. Only one category of workers (the typesetters) have gained the 40 hour work week, and that after a struggle lasting three or four years. Also professional restrictions are extremely severe. In the last few years leftist lawyers and teachers have been attacked, whose crime was that they had participated in seminars organized by the extreme left or even the C.P. Such a system requires requires a very strict social control. Switzerland, though a neutral country, is an active member of the European 'police community'. Half the public telephone booths in Geneva, for example, are tapped."



MIDNIGHT NOTES: Did you have a feeling in the spring of 1980 as to what was about to come down or was it a big surprise to you?
HERR MULLER: It was not a surprise, there were already a lot of struggles going on around housing and against traffic.
MN: The traffic demos, what were they about?
HM: There is a highway crossing a neighborhood where old leftists and new autonomous people live; it is a commuter highway and it has an underpass; there was a lot of pollution coming from it. The street was barricaded and a whole "game" was invented by the future, to-be movement and by the police. There was the old slogan: "For Life Against Concrete, Pollution, Cars." People were saying, "We have a right to live in this area and we are going to do whatever it takes to get it."
MN: So it was a demand for space.
HM: Yes, space is one of the most expensive commodities in Switzerland.
MN: Give some examples of rents.
HM: In the place where I used to live, an old type place, we paid $200 for a four room apartment. Now for a two and a half room apartment we pay $600. Half the space and twice the rent.
MN: Is this very common?
HM: Yes. There has been an explosion of rents in Zurich this last year.
MN: Why did you leave your old place?
HM: The owner changed and we got thrown out. They're now rebuilding these houses. They chop up the large apartments, make smaller ones and charge double.
MN: Sounds like Boston. What relation does this have with the struggle around the community center?
HM: It's not a community center. It's called "Autonomous Youth Center". The relationship? I'd say it's an organizational one: the same people who pulled the struggle around traffic and housing were among the organizers of the first struggle around the center, the cultural struggle. Because the whole thing was about culture, having a space for our culture, which was mainly rock, punk rock. People wanted a place where they could play that kind of music and just hang out together. You see, they have closed down all the bars and other places where we used to hang out, one after the other. First you don't have a place to live and then you have the same problem with public space. It's getting expensive as well, concert tickets are now $10 and more.
MN: So everybody was saying we need a place where we can do things and do them cheaply.
HM: Yes, and we can do it ourselves. We can play our own music and listen to our music without having to pay.
MN: Was the Autonomous Youth Center already there?
HM: No, the whole thing began in the spring of 1980 after this prologue had been played in traffic. There had been a referendum in the city about credit to rebuild the opera house. They got $40,000,000. Then there was a little demonstration to protest this in front of the opera house one Friday evening. 200 people, those who were into other kinds of mus ic, showed up. At this point, the authorities made a mistake, they sent the police in riot gear; the demonstrators felt

provoked and started throwing rocks. The police responded. There were a lot of people around in the neighborhood, like Greenwich Village, so when something started developing a crowd gathered and it just escalated. Suddenly you had two thousand people that same night and the "game" started: if you could not attack the police, you fled and while fleeing you smashed shop windows. You acted your response against the windows. The next people who came by saw that the windows were smashed and they could take things out and so the looting followed. The next day it made the news, "RIOT AND LOOTING IN ZURICH". That had not happened in Zurich for five hundred years; clearly something new was going on in the city. People kept gathering in the same place and there were more and more people on Saturday and Sunday nights.

MN: Who are these people?

HM: What do you want to know? Their sociological description, how they get their money?

MN: Everything.

HM: It is a proletariat in the broad sense that they work for a wage; you don't have to worry about that. Old time Leninists should be satisfied. But what kind of proletariat is this? It's a mixed, socially diffused proletariat; they are not tied down to any job but they move from job to job. Sometimes they get into unemployment (which is hard to do in Switzerland), but most of these people have gone through this experience. These are the kind of people who know all the possible ways of getting money, including money from the state. They are community people. It is easier to define them by how they reproduced themselves than by how they get their money. Some of them have their own business. Others work in printing shops and newspapers, but they are not stable jobs. A lot are apprentices, young workers who will never become foremen (small "bosses" over immigrant workers) as Swiss usually do. Then you have the second generation of Italian and Spanish workers. You have ages ranging from 14 to 45; you find everybody including a lot of people from the ideological industries like TV, radio people, social workers, teachers... nurses.

MN: We heard the movement had a good Red Cross team during the demos.

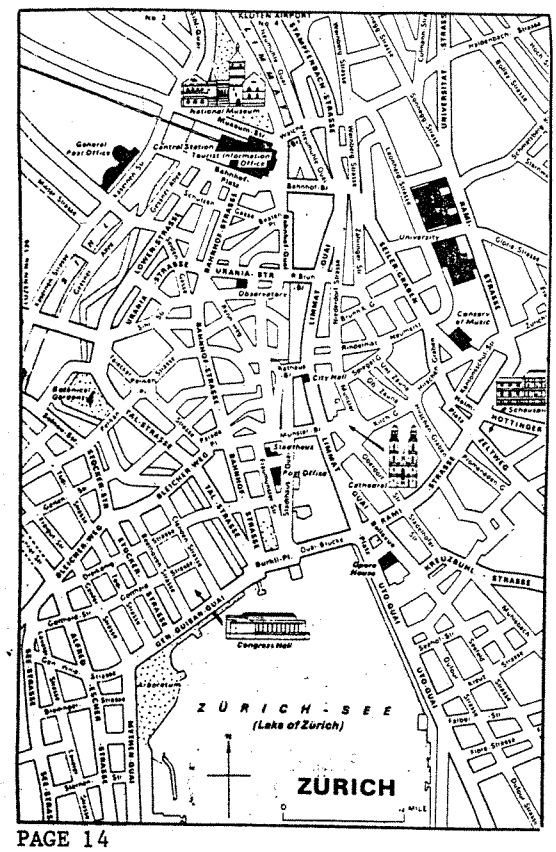
HM: Yes, that made the right wingers freak out, they could not deal with doctors running around in T-shirts like "hippies". It's an over-qualified, unstable, diffused proletariat. At the same time you have people who in the 70's refused qualification, like the "punkies". They are all into drugs so *you have the self-destructive crowd and the self-valuating crowd.* Some of them have made themselves cheap, sabotaged their own career. And then you have all kinds of "minorities" like gays and lesbians.

MN: Are there many women in the movement?

HM: As many as men. But you had a new feeling towards women, much more like "buddies". You can do heavy construction work with women like building barricades. This "buddy" aspect was evident during the demonstrations, in the confrontations with the police. The excitement was not sexual in an erotic sense. Nobody spoke of love. That is out, love is definately not a theme of the movement. Of course, this "buddy" relation does not resolve the "personal" problems between men and women.

MN: What about the nude demos?

HM: They were "sterile", not like a "love in". Nakedness did not have an erotic sense. Even the press does not see them as a kind of "fuck in", for they had nothing to do with sex. Rather they expressed the refusal of "militant", "violent" work. The first large nude demo came after a large day-time demo broke up and people went into a park for music and food until about ten or eleven at night. Then out of frustration they did it, they stripped naked. The police were completely



surprised, for this subverted all the former models of militant behavior. It was a kind of damage against yourself, for nakedness in this kind of situation means, "We are not going to fight for what we want."

MN: How about the gays?

HM: They showed up once qua gay. There was one gay demo, Gay Pride Day, commemorating the Stonewall riot.

MN: Tell us something about how the demos go.

HM: Basically you have a rally (announced or not), march through the street and at a certain point you start...somebody (I never did) starts making a barricade, throwing things onto the street. You can always rely on somebody doing it and they could always rely on somebody joining them. The police has a theory about this. They say there are 300 guys who do it, 300 who cover them and 300 behind those who just stand around and watch what's going on. The police want to get all these three categories of people in jail. These are the three essential elements of their so-called "by-stander theory". In fact, those who make the barricades could do nothing if they were not covered by the movement. Everybody is a by-stander, but that's why the by-standers are there... to allow the barricades to be built. They're not <u>real</u> by-standers.

MN: Is this going one everywhere in the city?

HM: There are certain areas, especially the main street, Limmatquai, along the river, Limmat. It's a very popular neighborhood, because it's always full of people from the outskirts. As if you had a river going through the Village, you would have a lot of things going on around that river. You stop traffic, which was what the prologue was about. You take whatever you find because it's not a barricade you defend. It's not like the Commune, nothing serious, it's just to prevent the cars from moving. Occasionally, the barricade was burnt to keep the fire between you and the police. Then the police intervenes. When they come, they disperse you, but then the whole routine of window smashing and looting starts again.

MN: The geography of the city must have helped out, with the alleys and small streets.

HM: Yes, at first it was very important, but later the police changed tactics. At first they came with 200 or 300 cops and made just one mass. They made something like a counter demonstration, they had one front line while you were much more into guerrilla movement. You could split up whereas they stuck together. But later on they split up too into little groups of 5-10 together and they were chasing you.

MN: They were not afraid that they would get knocked back?

HM: No, they were never seriously attacked. Occasionally there were some rocks thrown at them. Once they threw one into the river. But there was not direct physical assault on the cops. The ones that were attacked were the shops.

MN: On that level it was a very disciplined and controlled crowd. It sounds like Poland where it seems they made a mass decision not to directly confront the police as in 1970.

HM: You see in Switzerland you could always be more or less sure that the police would not kill you. That's not the case in Poland where they got massacred in 1970. So you cannot compare the two situations. You can play games with the Swiss cops. It was like a ballet and it would not have been possible without the police. They had to play their part.

MN: But if they catch you they'd beat you up?

HM: Yes, they are rough and they've become more and more rough. It's not that funny. A couple of people lost their eyes: rubber bullets. It's the only police in Europe that uses them. In West Germany they're still discussing it and for sure the German police is not renowned for its kindness. I think

it has something to do with the lack of personnel in the Swiss police. They don't really have a riot police to do the dirty work. They have to stand at a distance and be mechanized. They would not have enough policemen for beating up demonstrators in a mass.

The demos at the street level are a weekly or bi-weekly affair. Then you have a more "actionist" level, like those little groups, who independently of a demo taking place, move around doing something on their own. Sometimes you'd read about it in the paper: "Several dozen windows smashed in the downtown area". This of course without any immediate connection with a demonstration. Maybe it's a reaction to the frustration after they closed down the youth center. You also have attacks on construction firms that are connected with the housing problem. There have been firebombings of depots where machines and materials are kept. Fire is always being used. That's why the slogan of a film that just came out is "Zurich is Burning". This, the most secret level of the movement, causes millions of dollars of damage. They have no mandate, they do it on their own, you don't know who's doing it. But they leave leaflets on the place saying, "This is because you raised the rents."

MN: So is there a connection between these types of struggles and the movement?

HM: There is with the hard-core, hard-liner type. Lots of people in the movement reject it, others like it. But it has not officially been disavowed by the movement. There has never been a decision that this is wrong. On the other side you have the Social Democrats who pose as our friends. But they move on the institutional level and just use the movement as their strength in the party power game. They tell the other parties, "We want our share because we represent the movement." That's like the Walesa game: trying to represent a dangerous force within the institutions. The Social Democrats have not been given a mandate by the movement, but unlike the hard-liners, they have been disavowed.

MN: Is this movement all about the Youth Center?

HM: No. People didn't even know that there was such a building in the first place. There are two buildings in question actually. One is a former ITT factory, the "Red Factory", that has been recycled. It was empty and movement people wanted to struggle for that building but it was alittle outside of town. The city was not ready to give it. Meanwhile, they found out by accident that there was a building very close to the main railroad station which is in the center of the city. They said we want that *and* the other one. Then the whole struggle concentrated on the building in the city center. It had been a Maintenance Department depot where they kept snow plows and the like. The city did not even expect that anybody would like it. If you look at it it's really nothing. A 19th century building, useless. They found out they wanted that building and there was alot of struggle around it. The city gave them the building and they actually started using it very well.

MN: When did they get it?

HM: This was in June 1980. Right after the first riots. It was really quick because the city council thought that the whole thing would be over with this, that there would be just some alcoholics and drug addicts hanging out in that place suffocating any kind of activity. It almost happened but not quite. Their problem was that the center really started functioning, centralizing all kinds of other struggles around housing. It became a meeting point and that was very important. People got a taste of it. It's not just the problem of space, but *empty space* you can use in your way, unoccupied territory.

MN: Was the center used to organize squatting?

HM: Yes. Near the center there was one house squatted by alcoholics and drug addicts, as well as three or four others in other parts of the city. But new squattings were planned for the Fall. A lot of organization was going on around getting cheap housing. One of the major initiatives had to do with an old city housing project (called Rebhugel) built in 1919. It was two blocks long. One-fourth was still inhabited but the rest were empty apartments just waiting to be renovated.

MN: You were involved in this squatting... how did it work?

HM: We did not have any theory about whether we would get it or not, we just decided to move in. One morning, at 10 o'clock exactly, we were about 100 people and we moved in after using crow bars to open the doors. We had some furniture and other living stuffs. Just the basics, a bed and mattress. We moved in and it was really nice.

MN: How about lights and water?

HM: We had people who knew about it, within two or three hours everything was done. Usually it would take days to do it legally. Within four hours we felt at home and we felt that nobody could ever throw us out.

But after five hours, lots of police arrived, equipped with tear gas and everything.
MN: When did they find out you moved in?
HM: They knew from the start. There was a whole legal process of accusation and warrent that was done. It took five hours to mobilize the police. We fled, we did not defend it. We even had to leave the furniture. The problem was that we did not have any tactics no plan about what we would do if the police came. We were just telling the police that we were ready to move in, that we were going to do it, but we were not going to fight with them. The fight was the next day, on the territory we could choose in the city. There was a demonstration on housing in the center of the city and it was one of the most violent. The point is not to accept the terrain where you cannot do it. It's like: we want those houses but we didn't have to defend those houses because we couldn't. But we could defend those houses in a place where the authorities were much more vulnerable.
MN: How did you get along with the people who already lived in the project?
HM: At first the people were really hostile, but in two hours they liked us. A guy who was in the same house where we were was furious, he started throwing our furniture out of the window. "Get out! Get out!" But by the afternoon we were already discussing how we could fix this and that. His wife had already found a lot of girl friends among the women. They had been very lonely but they only found out because we were there. They found out what they had missed, within three hours that problem was solved.
MN: After the demo the next day, were you able to go back?
HM: No, we could not. They put a stinking substance into all the apartments, you could not use them. They sabotaged the use of them.
MN: What about the people that were living there?
HM: They were pissed off. It stinks like fish. It was chemical warfare. You could not use those apartments, there was no point. It would have been just symbolical. Now, just recently, some of the squatters did get some other apartments. The city is starting to give some housing, some apartments which they refused in the beginning.
MN: How does the movement get together, how does it make decisions? Are there parties, unions, any other type of organization?
HM: Some are in parties and unions, but the whole organizational mechanics lies in the general assemblies. They meet on Wednesday or Thursday at the "People's House", an old social democratic conventional hall. There are between 500 and 2000 people, usually there is no schedule, just a lot of people talking, microphones, everybody saying what they're feeling, a lot of people attacking each other. Women attacking men, hard-liners attacking "softies", some saying, "We've had enough of this window smashing, it doesn't pay" and the hard-liners saying, "You would not be here you softies if we hadn't started this way, for the soft line had been around for decades." Decisions are always made by vote like "Next Saturday we're going to make that demonstration, to accept this kind of proposal." There are two or three rules which are always respected: there is never a delegation, never a committee in charge of the whole thing, there is never any kind of negotiation on the demands. The demands are: the unconditional re-opening of the Youth Center and the unconditional release and amnesty for all who are accused; then there is the release of certain kinds of prisoners, especially one prisoner named Walter Stum, who's very popular.
MN: Who is he?
HM: He was a kind of burglar, he declared himself an organizer for prison struggles... during the riots there was a prison strike. He's a symbolic figure for all kinds of common prisoners, not just political. His release is one of the demands. There is no negotiation on them. No compromise possible.
MN: Is this because of the nature of the demands of because there is nobody to negotiate with?
HM: No, there have been a lot of people negotiating in the name of the movement but they have always been fucked up later by the movement. They would negotiate something but later nobody would respect it. Some of the most clever said, "Yes, let them do it, and if they get the center back we just will not respect the conditions under which they got it back." We take whatever we can get. It's the same as how they treat the social democrats. If they are able to give us something we accept, we are not sectarians.
MN: So there are no traditional parties in the movement?
HM: No, there are individuals...you see in the first two or three general assemblies the Trotskites and other political groups showed up explaining to the movement that they should unite with the factory workers and fight capital...there was only one big whistle and they never showed up again.

Because first of all there were factory workers in the movement and the last thing they would identify with would be guys like this. Political groups did not get any hold on the movement. They were doing a lot of things *for* the movement but the movement was never grateful. The movement just used them. Political groups were used as hostages between the movement and the state, but that was because the movement had its own strength at different levels: the street level, the fire-bomb level and the cultural level.

In between the individual and the movement, however, there are informal crowds, the "areas", the "tribes" and what are sometimes called the "pies". The are designated by the street or neighborhood in which they live. A demo would start with these "pies", so there would be a "community" base to the movement.

MN: What about the music, sex and drugs of the movement?

HM: The whole thing can be done under the chapter, "How does this diffused (sometimes qualified, sometimes refusing qualification) proletariat reproduce itself? How do they live? How do they get a positive balance every evening?" This is culture. This is music, how you get into time by rhythmn. The whole cultural problem starts with the breakdown of the family. It's a feeling of loneliness; if you are really alone you have to invent your own life, your own reproduction, what you're doing. There is nobody to take care of you and if they take care of you, you can not use them. This was due to the "breakdown of the family". In the 1960's lots of German and Swiss families split up and in the 70's even the families of the immigrants have begun to break up.

And then you have whole spaces where you cannot get your reproduction because they are "occupied". You need new spaces to reproduce yourself, invent your own life. This was mainly music: punk rock and new wave; and clothing. People started refusing "regular" clothing, they got into "punk" clothes and not just punk but also "new elegance", the californized dandies. So you have two ways in which you deal with your reproduction, oscillating between creativity and self-destruction.

MN: What kinds of self-destruction?

HM: Punk is outspokenly into self-destruction and so are the junkies. Heroin was very important. There were a lot of deaths in Zurich, double or triple the old rate. It's horrible, suicidal. Heroin is not mobilizing in itself. But all these deaths scared a lot of people and it became a spur to action. Suicide was always at the limits of the situation. It was played out by a woman who burned herself up in the street. She was a junkie but when she came into the movement she got off junk. But during a demonstration she was beaten and jailed by the cops. When she got out she was really fucked up... and then a while later this self-immolation. It was not directly related to the movement but everyone took it "personally".

As far as drugs are concerned, the movement itself is into hash and marijuana and the punkies, of course, are into alcohol.

MN: You mentioned some people scarring themselves.

HM: That's the whole punk culture. A culture of pain, a new culture of pain. Self-destructive but also aggressive. Like the smashing of windows becomes part of your reproduction. It was not a political action in the sense that you do it to get something. You live by doing this. It's a life-style. That's why it could last a year. If it had been a means people would have done it three or four times and if there was no result, or you got the center, that's it. Instead it did not stop with the winning of the center, there were still riots. That was one of the arguments of the city, "You see, it doesn't pay to be weak. They only understand force."

MN: How did the punks relate to the rest of the movement?

HM: You have different cultures coming together. Punk culture, the new elegance culture (the "chiceria" as they call it). But then there's the old '68 intellectual ugly guys who are still around. They're neglected but not because they want to be in pain but because they are body-unconscious. Then you have the hippie-country-side-"new peasant" type, long hair and soft clothes, woolen pull-overs, earth shoes.

MN: It's like a marriage between Bambi and De Sade.

HM: Yes, you have a culture that goes from the Marquis De Sade to Bambi. You have some recycled types from the anti-nuclear movement and others too tricky to classify. An important element in the movement was the presence of many mentally or physically handicapped people. In fact, the whole movement started with a "Festival for the Handicapped". As everybody felt handicapped, everybody went there. The handicapped were just marginalized in that festival and they said, "For once we got something of our own and we are on the side!" It was a huge success because everybody felt they were handicapped.

In the demos the presence of many handi-

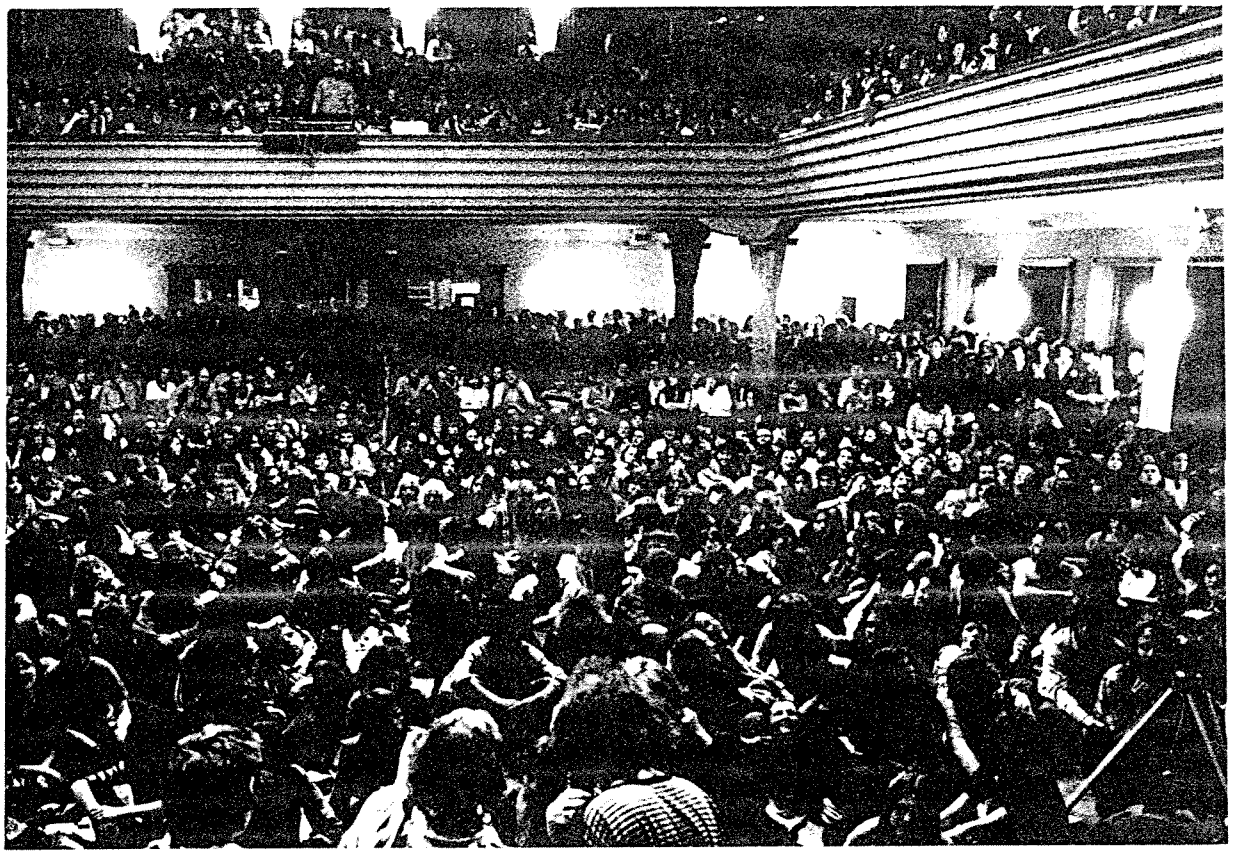
capped was crucial. People began to loose their fear and not just the fear of the police. Seeing cripples coming to the demos on wheelchairs made them realise that life keeps going on even if you loose an arm or an eye. That it was not true that you were finished if you were hurt and that gave us much more courage.

MN: The theme is alienation pure and simple.

HM: Yes, it's a movement that comes from alienation directly. Abstract, coming from

is another front, completely different. "The Concrete" as they say or "The Iceberg"... that's the city, money,capital. It's just another name for capital, "The Ice": solidified, coagulated work, dead work. It's a quite adequate Marxist terminology.

They found out that both the death culture and the life culture are opposed to the "Ice Age" of capital. They found out that all the conflicts they had among themselves were much less important than what they opposed. Capital



heaven somehow. Everybody felt handicapped, and that's true, everybody *is* handicapped. The Left had never done that, saying, "You are all cripples, we are all cripples, you are the crazies." The idea of the noble proletariat had been destroyed. People felt that for the first time you could show what you were lacking, how ugly you were. It is a movement of ugliness. A movement of the ugly people...of vulnerability and suicide.

MN: So this is a movement that makes cheese and does heroin...it's amazing that people coming from such different places can stick together.

HM: All these people who during the 70's had been separated and kept quarrelling with each other have been unified by the police. They were attacked together and both in the same way. So they found out that there

had never been forced to show itself, to show that it existed. Never had it become visible. The only way it could become visible was through the police. You could feel it.

MN: So the police are the "Polar Bears"?

HM: Yes. You could not be in Zurich finally and not feel that there was oppression, the state, capital. You were lost before; everybody was lonely and depressed, everybody felt handicapped. Then suddenly you felt that they were really there, that they existed, you could feel the attack, the ice, the coldness. That was the point of no return.

Certainly the police would not kill you. But they would not let you live either. They would not give you the space where you could live. Yet they would not kill you, they would keep you alive, but frozen.

MN: Not everyone in Switzerland is in the

movement obviously, how do the "non-movement" types, the "ordinary people" relate to it?
HM: Not so few people have been involved. On the whole there have been on the streets about 150,000 this year in different demos. There has been a lot of overlapping, so I would say there have been about 50,000 people involved out of a population of about 1,000,000 in the Zurich metropolitan area. So you always have a neighbor who has been there. In the average high school class there would be at least one student who was there. Everywhere, in all businesses, you would find somebody who was there. Nobody has been left untouched.

For example, during a demo on the Bahnhofstrasse (like Fifth Ave. in NY City) you would see the police coming, flee to the sidestreets and find a guy in a grey suit and tie with an attache case. He would open the attache case, take out a rock, throw it, close it and go on. You would find such people. Another time you would be hiding in the hallway of a house and could not see whether the police were coming, a black guy would pass (there are black businessmen in Zurich) and without looking at you would say, "They're behind the next corner." So there are many accomplices.

MN: Now, you have little unemployment and high wages, granted there's not enough housing to go around but basically Switzerland is a social democratic paradise in the capitalist world. Why is everybody so unhappy?
HM: The wage, how much you get doesn't change the situation. Marx was right when he said that the point is that you're alienated. Work remains a problem even if you are well paid. This is no relative problem...the problem of being alienated and having enough pay is as serious as dying from hunger in India. You have people who die, kill themselves, from this kind of situation, the heroin deaths. You cannot say these problems are not serious. If you have death, that's the most serious thing you can imagine anywhere.
MN: So winning the right to a full plate is not enough?
HM: Most people say, "It's a nice concentration camp." There's no unemployment in a concentration camp. That's how Switzerland is like. It's a problem to get on unemployment because they immediately find you a job. They force you to take a job. That's the other side. I had lots of friends who wanted to go on unemployment for a change, but they could not. They would get them a job.
MN: Are you saying that in a case like Switzerland the real demand is not for more wages, but space, resources, time...
HM: This space demand is, of course, an indirect wage demand; if you take the wage as what you get for your work. That could as well be in the form of space. If you want to, from a purely Marxist point of view, you can subsume these kinds of struggles under the wage struggle. This is true as we know, there's no such thing as a struggle outside of the wage struggle. The problem is that if you put it in that abstract way you don't understand anything that is going on. That doesn't tell you anything because it's always true. You can say the wage struggle goes from South Africa to Alaska...what does it mean? It means that all the rules of the game are still valid. For example, there have been wage struggles in the sense that many parts of the more traditional working class like the rail road workers and the printing workers

took advantage of the situation and demanded higher wages and they got them more or less.
MN: How has the movement affected these other sectors?
HM: For the first time in a while there is a front line going through the whole society, and you can relate to that front. More and more, all social movements relate to this front, like the railroad workers making jokes about "Icebergs". Everywhere you find that this new language is taking over. The language is a threat, because people in any sector can say: "We use the language but we mean the facts. You can still deal with us in the old ways if you want, but if you don't, we now have found out there's a front we can go to." Capital's problem is that it's not only Zurich, it's going on throughout Northern Europe. Like the German metalworkers being on strike, it's different. It becomes a threat. They say, "There has been a proof, a general proof that everything can get out of hand." That you can say of Poland also. Even in a communist country things can get out of hand.
MN: Even in Switzerland.
HM: Yes. If there was one country in which you thought nothing could get out of hand it was Switzerland. In Poland you might expect it because they had a long history of this kind of struggle, but Switzerland was completely unexpected. That's why it's worth talking about. It was a complete surprise.
MN: Now it has expanded to Germany, the Netherlands, Scandinavia...
HM: It has not expanded *from* Zurich, but Zurich gave a lot of courage to all those guys: "If *they* can do it in Zurich *we* can do much more here!" That's really the mood. "They are not going to teach us a lesson!" It is the same struggle in Berlin around housing and in Amsterdam where you had the police moving with tanks against the demonstrators. It was much rougher in Amsterdam.

It is a wage struggle but it isn't immediately about money. It's based on the commodities. But what has been used is the language, it's European now: "Iceberg", "Anti-concrete", "For Life Against Concrete", there is no talking all the old political language. By refusing it you can by-pass all kinds of anti-communist propaganda. The bourgeois newspapers were deluded, they would say, "This is not political; it's a cultural movement so it's not dangerous." Only lately have they begun to say that this whole thing is being organized by an international network of terrorists, but they don't really believe it. It's only crazy guys like Strauss in Germany or some right-wing city councilers in Zurich who think that, because obviously it's not true. It's impossible.
MN: Why is the situation so different in Southern Europe?
HM: That's because the whole situation of reproduction is completely different. In Southern Europe you still have a family background. You have old, archaic back-up systems. If capital fucks up you can go back to "feudalism", not feudalism in the classical sense, but you have the family, the Mafia, the cousins in the countryside. You can be poor but you can survive. You can go back to a non-money economy. That's not possible in Northern Europe any more. Either you invent your own reproduction or you're completely

lost. There's no back-up system. You're alone. The feeling of loneliness is very important. Here you have the ice and there is you, the Eskimo and the Ice with Icebears threatening you. That's why all this "Ice" stuff. You can't use that language in Italy, it's just too warm and not only in a geographical sense but in a human, family sense. Capital has not been very efficient in Southern Europe; the quality of life there is too high, even in poor countries. They have certain standards. In Northern Europe there is complete discipline, they can do whatever they want with you. Like Woody Allen, he can take and take and shit as much. He's completely elastic. He is the ideal of one whose needs can always be redefined. He's never at an end, he can always take more shit. Whereas an Italian or a Greek will take a certain quantity and then he cannot any more. He will explode.

MN: The women have helped bring on the "destruction of the family" themselves?

HM: Yes, there is female employment. Women wanted to get out of the house. My mother worked; I grew up with a key around my neck. These kids are now on the streets more or less for the women work more and more. That's what the right-wingers say all the time, of course; it really starts with the family. This housing struggle is also an attack on the family because it is not family housing that young people want but community housing. We want to invent new types of communal life-styles. It was done in the 60's but now there is a new wave going back to it.

MN: Are there many mothers and children in the movement, is that a big issue?

HM: Yes. There are many mothers and there are always children around. They are accepted as being part of the whole thing. Just buddies. Nine-year old punkies.

MN: This is not a union movement nor a political movement as classically defined, how would you describe it?

HM: It's a union founded on culture. You do not identify yourself by your job, you do not even organize yourself on you job. But you organize yourself around your reproduction because the job is just the place where the "fuel" comes from. Anyway, the job is also changing all the time so I am not a "worker", I'm a punk or a reggae guy or a "chicaria" guy or a junkie. There are lot's of new identities you can find. On that level you organize very efficiently because you recognize the members of the same organization by their clothing which you cannot do in a union. A metalworker is hard to identify off the job. At the same time, this kind of organization also allows complete anonymity. You can be anonymous and have an identity at the same time.

MN: Can you talk about what you call "Mullering", the "dysinformation struggle", this conscious attempt to fuck up capital's lines of communication.

HM: That's ideological sabotage by not accepting the language or the expected way of behvaior. The Muller business was very important. A man and a woman from the movement had been invited to be on TV to defend the point of view of the movement in a round table discussion. Instead of doing that they

defended the point of view of the "silent majority", the right-winger, presumably the average Swiss. (It is a fiction, though there are some like those old working class guys who went through the crisis of the 30's. Those are the only hard-core, right-wing Swiss state supporters. They are not "right wing" in an official sense, they can also be social democrats. It's not right wing as a particular ideology but just as totally for law-and-order and the state. They are the ones who defend law-and-order against the movement.) There was a film done of one of these guys watching the Mullers and as they were saying that the state should put the movement in concentration camps, shoot them, put them to work, guys like him were saying "Yes! Yes!" When it turned out that they were movement people the indignation was very big. That happened several times on TV. TV got fucked up. On that show a hard-core social democratic woman usually for law-and-order had to defend the point of view of the movement against the Mullering. This Mullering is a constant element of the whole movement. Also on the language level. For example, you have demonstrations of 10,000 people shouting "WORK! WORK! WORK!" to the by-standers. But then you have this Czecho-slovakian reporter of *Rude Pravo* (the Party paper) who wrote an article on the Zurich riots saying that there was a demonstration of 10,000 unemployed people demanding work! It was dysinformation beyond the Iron Curtain. They could not tell their people that there were actually 10,000 people shouting against work in the West, because the Czechoslovakians want to get to the West. They want to be able to "really" work and get some money. The whole myth of the West would have been destroyed in their eyes.

Another form of dysinformation is making sprayed messages on the wall; for example, the Marlboro slogan "Freedom and Adventure" was sprayed all over the city, "Marlboro: Freedom and Adventure". Everybody understood what it meant: we want freedom and adventure against the police, against the state, against the work. Whenever you saw a *real* Marlboro advertisement you'd remember...so you could use official advertising by copying it. It's an old joke, like Andy Warhol's soup cans. You use official slogans to get your message around.

So people took to re-doing street signs, re-naming streets, putting small stickers all over the city--stamp size--now the streets are full of signs. Of course, you have this circled A which stands for "autonomy" or "anarchy". It used to be "anarchy" but now most people understand it as standing for "Autonomous Youth Center".

MN: What about the critique that you people are anarchistic, not really organized to deal with the state, not ready to control production, etc.

HM: Actually we have always been very efficient in terms of organization, but the best thing organization can produce is surprise. That's why you organize, to be in a place before the others are there. Surprise was one of our strengths all the time. So you cannot say that there was no organization: *the sense of surprise and getting people at the right moment to surprise the others.*

MN: The Leninist conception of the movement is that it is a river that can be turned here and there by the smart organizers and eventually be dammed up to run a power plant and generate work...

HM: Yes...but here the movement is a life style. It is already what is *after* the movement. Whatever it can invent is the horizon.

MN: What you're saying is that a major motive force behind this movement is that right now unless you do something like this

in Switzerland you would go nuts...unless you have people going out openning up some space you'd have afew million people berserk. But can it go on...can the state and capital tolerate it?

HM: I'm quite sure it will go on because there are a lot of untapped resources, there are a lot of people who are ready to get involved but have not yet found their way. There's a lot of sympathy around this movement. People are attracted by this kind of culture: language and literature, theater and music grew this whole year. There's a lot of temptation around this movement. The

only thing that capital can do to deal with this is to try to institutionalize it...open all this space, like have a Fool's Day every week or a Carnival every two months. There already have been things like that. Carnival always existed in Zurich--there was a period of three or four days in the year where you could do whatever you wanted, you had the streets. You could mask yourself, you could act, you were anonymous, you were not responsible for what you were doing. Capital could think about institutionalizing it, saying, "Let's give them something like in Poland." This is the line in Berlin, the German government feels very much this way. "Let's give them 200 or 300 houses. It's only one-tenth of the population that is into this life style, we can probably live with it." In Zurich they would say we cannot live with 10% of that, because our proletariat, much more than in West Berlin, is fragile. When the Swiss start freaking out they become useless. Where manufacturing is still central you can always use crazy workers doing shit work, it doesn't matter how crazy you are when you dig a hole. But you cannot really use crazy accountants and crazy computer programmers because they are going to fuck up millions of dollars in one "breakdown". So Swiss capital cannot say that craziness can be institutionalized and you can live with it! It would always be a temptation for this kind of person, that's way capital needs some ideological stability, some major way of functioning. That is why all this dysinformation tactics is so important. It is like a thought poison...the whole movement is disintegrating coherent behavior. Irrationalism is used as a weapon against capital.

MN: So "dysinformation" is a way of spreading the movement?

HM: That's one of the most important, most contagious things...the language. Because the work of most people in Zurich is language, mostly figures. If you fuck up language you fuck up all work processes. If it continued like this within afew years capital would collapse. "Dysinformation" is very disintegrating, very dangerous. They could only shut down the whole place. Capital would have to withdraw from Zurich.

MN: In "No Future Notes", *Midnight Notes #2*, we found that alternativism can be easily integrated into the system.

HM: Yes, I'm familiar with your argument but it only works if you can make a selection within the "alternativist area". Capital in Switzerland was not able to divide between pure alternativists and the "destructive" people. They could not make the distinction between alternativists and pure anti-capitalists. This whole scheme did not work, though they tried to separate between the "cheese people" and the "window smashing people". There was a long article in a Swiss newspaper

about young people in the Alps who made cheese. All the "moral majority" types were saying: "Those guys in the streets should take the example of the good, young people who are making cheese and upholding the Swiss traditions in the Alps."For one-fifth of the Swiss Alps are run by alternativists. It is one of the most traditional parts of Swiss culture. And the "cheese people" wrote back a letter saying, "You old asshole, there's complete solidarity between us and those who smash windows in Zurich. We would do the same thing in the city. What else can you do but destroy it and what else can you do on the Alps but make cheese?" The "Moral Majority" was completely destroyed. Actually I met a friend of mine who came down from the Alps for a holiday to go to a demo. There was an even more dramatic incident. Some people who were arrested by the police had to be freed because they had to take care of their cows. They said, "You cannot keep up us because the cows cannot wait for the trial. You cannot keep us in jail, we have to go make Swiss cheese!"

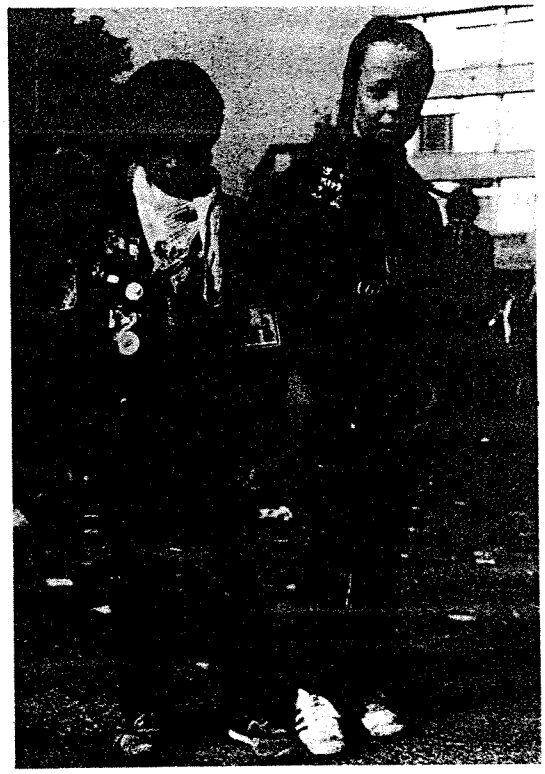
The mixture of alternativism and this kind of "destructive" approach is still explosive. It becomes harmless only if you can put the alternativists exclusively to work and make a clearcut distinction between them and the rest. A lot of people in Zurich now say the situation is like that before the bourgeois revolution. The bourgeoisie already had the means of production in their hands but not the state, the nobility was still in charge. So the alternativists are saying that they are getting their economic basis together at a low level. They say: "We can depend on ourselves, we can live without capital." That's one of their strengths. The alternativists which during the 70's looked like they were integrated turn out to be one of the strengths of the movement because they don't have to be afraid of "capital withdrawing" and being thrown back to a no-man's-land. If capital withdraws, everyone rejoices. A lot of people now say that's exactly what they want.

MN: But alternativism seems to be a return to labor intensive work...

HM: That's not true. This new type of agriculture is not going back, it is very refined. Reproduction is always in the foreground. It's probably more efficient to use a lower technological level but stay in better mental health. It's more expensive to mend people than to mend machines.

MN: But do we have to choose between going crazy and scratching the dirt?

HM: No. The highest quality of life is not dependent anymore upon the level of goods produced by capital. If you have friends around that have studied this and that, having these people is more valuable than getting one more TV. Capitalism has nothing to offer. Labor power is now so expensive, we are so expensive somehow that using ourselves is a higher luxury than using a machine. That's why it is a struggle around space and time.



But time is not as central now because it has been won a little bit with the spreading of part-time work which began to take root some years before this thing started. The cultural movement started a year or two before with music, "Stilleto" and other underground journals. Then you needed the space.

But there is a high technological level in the movement. The police band was continually tapped on the radio. You'd go to a demonstration in the afternoon and then you'd go home and have a good dinner. Whenever the police would say, "OK, now we're going in", we'd join the demonstration. You'd use all forms of media. Like there would be groups that would jam the sound of the TV announcer and put in a different sound track; you had the regular picture but there was another voice. There are five or six groups in Zurich doing this, as well as "pirate" radio stations: Radio Banana, Radio Wildcat, Radio Iceberg, but they can only broadcast for 15 minutes at a time because the police would find their location, so they go from one transmitter to another.

MN: What about your slogans?

HM: At first they were metaphorical like "Free Greenland" but now it is more and more jokes like "Legalize strawberry ice cream." It's propaganda, it's dysinformation.

MN: It's not clear why this thing should end.

HM: True, people are really relaxed. There are lots of people saying, "Let's end it," but those are the same who show up in the next demonstration. It has become like a drug.

MN: Is there a possibility that the movement can be fragmented?

HM: Fragmentation will not necessarily weaken the movement. In fact, it started fragmented. For example, when the women decided to have meetings of their own it was never a sign of weakness. The movement became stronger out of it.

MN: What happened?

HM: One day the women said, "We cannot stand this kind of male, macho talk." There's a certain part of the movement that are Red Army Faction supporters, ideologically not really. It's the old Leninist behavior, the small strategists, they are never very efficient, but they create a macho-type of atmosphere. Nobody takes them seriously, but at a certain moment the women said they could not stand them any more. They met once or twice alone. But the women's movment was always there. They put out their own newspaper, it was called *WOMEN'S FASHIONS*, (as if it was a *NY TIMES* fashion magazine) but it was completely punkie.

MN: Could the Swiss government follow what seems to be the "new soft line" in Germany?

HM: Well, it's mostly in West Berlin where they are trying to be more flexible and accept that there is a "new type" around. They have become "pluralists". After all there are Bavarians, Blacks, Chinese, so there will be alternativists. They will be sorted out somewhow. They figure that this is not against the system, just a new product of the system, a new way of life with advantages and disadvantages. The only city in which they can do it is West Berlin because it is an isolated, "special case". West Berlin is *the* welfare city anyway. They would say, "They're just crazy people." But the movement is still growning like a cancer and they try to circle it--not to cut it out but to stabilize it. They say, "We are going to live with cancer but make it stab le, we may have lung cancer but we don't want heart cancer and brain cancer as well." I talk about "cancer"

because if there is a physiological model for the growth of this movement this is what it looks like. The Leninist metaphor of political methodology is the heart attack, a sudden collapse--the whole attention is on the heart and you can neglect the other organs. But nowadays that model does not work any more because capital has many hearts and many brains. In the 60's U.S. capital had hegemony, that's not true any more. Today capital is more decentralized. Europe can get fucked up and the U.S. can go on. (Poland poses the same problem for the communist countries.) So you must have another type of disease like cancer: there is not one organ but a cancer for each organ.

MN: So they don't seem to know what to do.

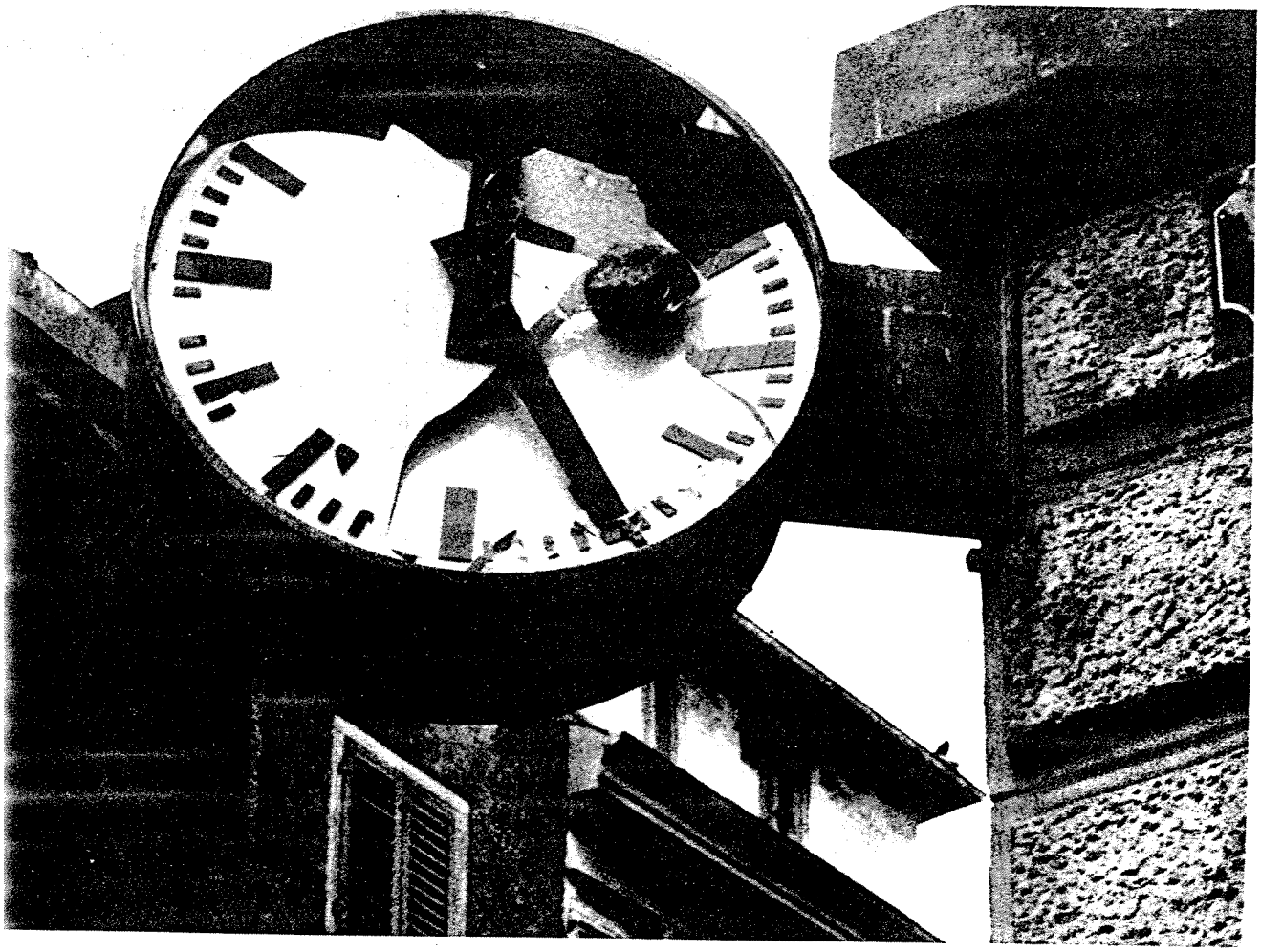
HM: Yes, that's why they're always saying, "You can get whatever you want, but just talk to us with responsible delegations, and be like us. The you will have it." That was the point of the whole thing, for that's what the work process is all about, being responsible. It's not our demands that are impossible but the way we've made them.

MN: What about the crisis?

HM: In the last few years Northern Europe has overcome the "crisis" while the Southern part has not. Northern Europe got rid of inflation and had a new boom. In 1979-80 the pressure on lots of people was released. Unemployment eased up a little bit, or you had learnt to cope with it.

It's like they put the patient under a heavy dose of chemotherapy and they thought they cured the proglem, but the minute they stopped it came back. Not only that but many people are immune now. "What," they say, "you're threatening us with a crisis? But we've gone through the crisis and we know what that is." It's true, young people were badly hit in 1975, many were ruined. It was a shock. But things have eased up and now it would be difficult for the government to play the same game again.

Note: As of May 1981 the movement won back the Autonomous Youth Center and Walter Stum escaped from prison.



Spatial Deconcentration in D.C.

We begin with a murder--that of Yulanda Ward in Washington, D.C. at 2 A.M., November 2, 1980. She was shot to death in what now appears as an assassination disguised as a street robbery. She was not robbed but her head was pushed over the edge of a car and shot; her three companions were robbed but not otherwise harmed. The weapon of murder appears to have been a .357 Magnum, not exactly a street-crime weapon. According to the Yulanda Ward Memorial Fund and other groups, her murder has been followed by either thorough police incompetence or a systematic cover-up and non-investigation. Moreover, the police have attempted to stop the independent investigation of her murder, even though "grapevine" inquiries report that she was murdered by "out of town" hired killers.

Why be concerned with this one murder? Who was Yulanda Ward? She was a 22 year old black community activist involved with the Washington, D.C. Rape Crisis Center, the Black United Front and other community groups, most notably the Citywide Housing Coalition. It is this last activity that could have led to her death, for she was a key activist in uncovering a U.S. government plan labelled "spatial deconcentration."

We reprint the following article on spatial deconcentration for two reasons. First, its information is valuable while its analysis begins to uncover many important political points about the organization of space under capitalism. Second, *if* Yulanda Ward was assassinated, we wish to alert others about it and urge them to assist the Yulanda Ward Memorial Fund in investigating the reasons for and perpetraters of the murder. In this way we hope that our increased vigilance will help stop any violent state repression of the type suspected in this case.

This article focusses on Washington, D.C. but the spatial deconcentration program is nationwide. The precise patterns and plans may vary from place to place, the essential operation is constant: to remove the treat posed to concentrated capital by concentrated masses of urban poor.

Yulanda Ward was murdered in D.C. In other cities local organizers for the Grassroots Unity Conference, of which Yulanda was a member and which has been combatting spatial deconcentration, have been attacked physically and verbally--burglaries, false arrests, threatening phone calls, verbal attacks by government officials. Nonetheless, and necessarily, the struggle continues.

SPATIAL DECONCENTRATION
by
The Yulanda Ward Memorial Fund

Housing activists in Washington have long battled with indifferent city officials, individual and organized, and the Metropolitan Washington Board of Trade as we sought to halt the displacement of masses of Blacks and other poor or working class minorities from the inner cities to the suburbs. Since 1972 campaigns have centered around rent control, condominium and hotel conversions, land speculators, and government bureaucracy. We clearly understood the process of gentrification (replacing poor inner city residents with middle and upper class "gentry"), and perceived the underlying economic basis on which the process rested with land speculators vigorously exploiting inner city neighborhoods. The displacement of Blacks and other minorities from the inner city was thought to be a product of the capitalist housing market, which provides housing only for those who can afford it. It was not until 1979 that we discovered and began to research a Federal government program called "spatial deconcentration", the hidden agenda behind the phenomenon of displacement. We discovered that displacement had an economic base to be sure, but more importantly, it was a means of social control--a means to break up large concentrations of Blacks and other inner city minorities from their communities. We have witnessed the forced evacuation of more than 50,000 poor inner city residents from the city each year and their subsequent replacement by an affluent class. We understood the role of the

government and its officials as it aided this process by creating laws that benefitted landlords and speculators while impoverishing tenants, but it wasn't until Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) documents began to surface using the words "housing mobility" and "fair housing" that we began to understand the magnitude of the masterplan to rid the city of its inner city poor and working classes. To fully understand this program we had to examine its history, the atmosphere out of which it developed, and its objectives. After this, we had concrete answers for why 50,000 poor people a year are being driven into Prince Georges, Montgomery, Prince William, and other suburban jurisdictions increasingly further away from the inner city, while central city neighborhoods are allowed to decay until speculators and middle class whites move in to take them over.

The riots that rocked American cities in the 1960's provoked lengthy govermental studies to investigate the riots and to make recommendations on what could be done to prevent civil disturbances by oppressed minorities. President Lyndon Johnson appointed a special commission, the National Advisory Committee on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission) in 1968, composed of police and army specialists, FBI and CIA agents, and civilian consultants who worked at "thinktank" institutions like the Brookings Institute, the Rand Corporation, and the Urban Institute. The commissions, clearly connected with the Pentagon, the State Department, the CIA and the FBI, felt that large concentrations of Blacks in the inner cities represented a threat to the security of the United States and had to be removed from the cities immediately. Thus, the Kerner Commission's recommendation was that low income housing projects and the Blacks that lived in them, should be relocated from inner city neighborhoods to sites outside the central city. This would break up the concentrations of Blacks within the central city and thus disrupt their potential to erupt into violence in response to their economic conditions. The commission recommended that Blacks be systematically placed in outlying suburban counties and dispersed, so that the counties themselves remained white dominated, but the Blacks would be isolated and broken up, neutralizing their violent potential. The death this same year of Martin Luther King and the subsequent riots hastened the government's determination to control Black people in the innter city. The Federal government acted on the Commission's recommendations and began, in 1969, a program called "spatial deconcentration" which to date, has received a Federal investment of over 5 billion dollars.

The enactment of the program required the coodination and cooperation of many government officials and capitalists, and due to the large sums of money being offered by the government, received widespread development and support. Metropolitan areas in America have witnessed how banks and insurance companies have redlined central city neighborhoods while real estate speculators have milked what profits they could from these communities, further hastening the deterioration as thousands of housing units were demolished, abandoned, or taken off the market for any number of reasons. As the artificially created energy crisis worsened, the inner city became an attractive option to the middle class that fled to the suburbs in the 50's and 60's. Redevelopers and banks began redevelopment or "urban renewal" projects which have caused the displacement of hundreds of thousands of inner city residents of Washington and other urban cities over the past ten years. Due to a housing shortage as artificially created as the energy crisis, the victims of urban renewal are forced to relocate in the suburbs, thereby eliminating their political presence within the central city.

The workings of the spatial deconcentration program are simple. First, the Blacks have to be driven out of a neighborhood and placed in suburban jurisdictions that are forced to take them, or co-opted with bribes of large Federal grants. In Washington D.C., in order to drive people out of a particular inner city neighborhood, the Federal government, along with the D.C. City Council and the Mayor, eliminated the housing in neighborhoods by giving landlords incentives to abandon their buildings, or remove rental units from the market by specially designed rent control and conversion laws. We witness this practice in action by the continuous loopholes found in all of our rent control legilation that allow landlords to abandon their buildings, convert them to condominiums, or generally remove them from the market. Second, the government closes down all of the public housing it has sponsored since the 1930's, thus forcing the displacement of the poor people living in them. For low or fixed income homeowners in the community, property taxes are escalated and housing services are decreased, thus also impoverishing this group of people. Once the housing is eliminated, then other services that support the community are cut back--the public transporta-

tion is rerouted or a subway is built that totally bypasses the community. Available schools for the children are closed down in the name of budget cuts; hospitals are relocated to 'improve health delivery systems'; jobs are taken away as businesses are offered inducements to relocate in other areas. The entire community is destabilized to force the people of that community to want to move as their lifestyle deteriorates. Yet, poor people can't just pick up and move just because a neighborhood has gone down. Moving takes money, and this is where the government plays its most visible role.

In 1974 Congress enacted the Housing and Community Development Act, which revamped the Revenue Sharing and Urban Renewal programs. One section of the Act specifies that one of its main purposes is "spatial deconcentration" of impacted neighborhoods in the inner cities. The next year, the Federal subsidy program, Section 8, was enacted by Congress. The creator of the Section 8 program was a civilian member of the Kerner Commission called Anthony Downs who also developed the entire theory of spatial deconcentration for social control in his 1973 book entitled *Opening Up the Suburbs*, Section 8 was specifically aimed at the poorest of the poor and was a rent subsidy program that allows tenants to pay a maximum of 25% of their monthly income for rent with the government picking up the tab for the rest. Of course, like most subsidies, the real estate interests are guaranteed profits while the tenants have to wait on long waiting lists to register for the privilege of guaranteeing these profits for landlords.

So when poor people are forced into a position of having to move, they are granted Section 8 certificates which appear to ease the burden of not having a place to stay. However, the catch to the Section 8 program is that by using it, you no longer have a choice in where you can live. The new "housing mobility" created through Federal subsidies actually eliminated freedom of housing choice because at the same time HUD is giving Section 8 certificates to the suburbs, they claim there is not enough money available to keep people in D.C. They will give Section 8 certificates to families in D.C. but allow them to use them only in specifically selected suburban counties, not allowing the people to stay in D.C. to be close to the jobs, the Metro, the culture or the human services. This forces them out to the suburbs where there is no way to join together to struggle. Of course, the people become even more impoverished as welfare assistance programs, like AFDC, provide even less income than allotted in D.C. This entire process paves the way for the upper classes to replace poor people in inner city communities, under the guise of increasing the tax base of the city to provide more services to the poor residents of the city. The whole program of physically moving the poor and working class population out of D.C. which is actually spatial deconcentration is disguised as a "Fair Housing Program" called Areawide Housing Opportunities Program (AHOP). Simply put, you disperse the concentrations of Black and poor people in D.C. where they could erupt into a dangerous force to challenge the ruling class of the city and form a political base to threaten indifferent and sold-out officials. The program creates small pockets of poor people, isolated in the suburbs, available to work when the economy needs them, but separated and alienated, like the South African Blacks who are forced to live in *Bantustans* that surround rich white settler cities.

The spatial deconcentration program has played a major role in the transformation of Washington, D.C. from a riot-torn, abandoned inner city to a fast growing executives' paradise. Since Washington's primary industry has always been the Federal government, now more so than ever, a large executive class is being drawn into Washington by attractive real estate, the energy crisis, and the cooperation of Federal and city officials. Meanwhile, unemployment for the poor and working class escalates; the few of them who receive training and jobs are limited to clerical or blue collar jobs with little or no upward mobility. Fewer and fewer jobs are available to the poor in the inner city, and to counter the effects of the program, the city government must create job programs (designed to fail) in order to pacify the remaining population. In addition, we have a city which is experiencing record-breaking commercial construction (office buildings, the Civic Center, etc.) yet has a critical shortage in that basic human necessity, shelter. This condition was created by the fact that Washington was one of the original cities targeted for implementing the spatial deconcentration program in 1969. The program has been operating here for eleven years and is the concrete basis for the advanced stage of displacement we are experiencing.

The implementation of the spatial deconcentration program for the Washington area (AHOP) required the authority and financing of the Federal government, the

participation of private industry, and the cooperation of local governing bodies. The application of the program to Washington was undertaken by the Washington Council of Governments (WashCog) which is the inter-jurisdictional body for the metropolitan area, composed of elected officials from Washington, Virginia and Maryland and, again, consultants from thinktanks like the Brookings Institute and the Urban Institute. WashCOG began administration of the program by enlisting the support of the District officials to create the inner city conditions that would force people to move. These officials ensured that neighborhoods that were already devastated by the riots were left to decay and support services were cut. Next, WashCOG had to persuade suburban officials to accept the flow of Blacks who would be forced into their communities. Most of the persuasion was accomplished through Federal bribes in the form of Community Development monies. The impetus for the persuasion come with the Fair Housing Laws passed by Congress. They ensured that under the mask of "integration" white suburban neighborhoods would have to accept poor Blacks from the inner city. Suburban communities were also granted other bonuses as they received more public transportation (the Metro), increased social services (from the Federal payments) and were assured that there would always be white dominance in the suburbs since the Blacks would be dispersed over large areas. Prince Georges' county was the first area country to buy into the program. We now see the county government moving to halt the flood of Blacks into the county, fearing Black dominance.

The next phase of the program requires the persuading of the poor people in the inner city that life is better in the suburbs. The Section 8 certificates now come into play, as housing counselors, usually springing from government-sponsored community groups, urge people to relocate wherever their Section 8 certificate placed them, which is always in the suburbs. Apparent community groups, like Metropolitan Washington Planning and Housing Association, support the objectives of the program by assisting tenants in obtaining Section 8 certificates, and omitting to warn them of their loss of housing choice. In fact, MWPHA sponsored a HUD workshop entitled "Increasing Housing Opportunities in the Suburbs" in May 1980. The hidden punch line to the workshop was that to increase housing opportunities in the suburbs, you must first decrease them in the city, which is the essence of spatial deconcentration. The government has made increasingly larger grants available to train community housing organizers, so that they may learn to properly administer Section 8 programs. Many of the grassroots housing groups in Washington are dependent on Section 8 contracts for their survival, and will refuse to recognize and discontinue the role they play in the program.

The monetary benefittors of the spatial deconcentration program are the real estate interests. Land values in the inner city skyrocketed, while suburban developers made tremendous profits from developing the communities which will house the Blacks being driven out. Owners of buildings who have Section 8 tenants are guaranteed profits that will be paid by the Federal government, and usually can obtain loans for renovation from the government at interest rates 5-8% lower than the regular market. For example, a large, sprawling apartment complex in Silver Spring, Montgomery County, Maryland recently accepted a large number of Section 8 tenants from Washington D.C. In return, the owners of the property were granted large loans to renovate the property. The owners only have to allow Section 8 tenants to stay in the building for five years. After that, they can convert to condominium, luxury apartments, or whatever they want, because they've tripled the value of the property with the renovations paid for by the government. However, after the five years are up, the poor tenants who moved into the building will have to move again. They will not ultimately benefit from the renovations, and furthermore, will be forced even further away from the inner city.

An investigation is proceeding into Yulanda Ward's death. Assistance, inquiries and contributions to the investigation should be addressed to:

The Yulanda Ward Memorial Fund
P.O. Box 21005
Washinton, D.C. 20009

POSTSCRIPT

The two featured articles, *Fire and Ice* and *Spatial Deconcentration*, both deal with the question of space in capitalist society. Like all social categories, it has two sides. In this afterword we wish to briefly discuss some of the implications of the space struggle previously described.

I. Planning

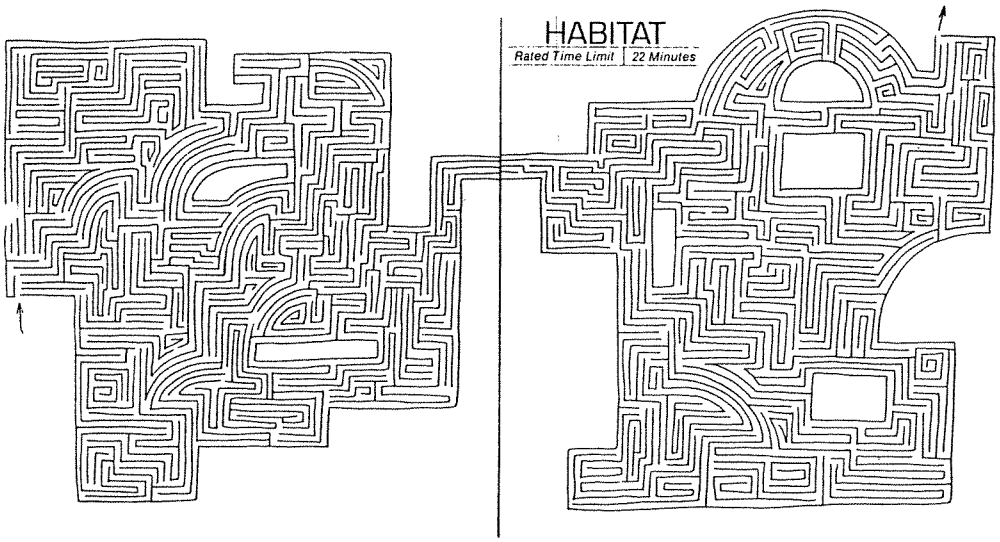
Spatial Deconcentration reveals the method capital increasingly relies on to overcome the "crisis of social democracy" in the U.S.: *planning through the market*. One of the age-old secrets of capitalist magic is the knowledge that in any relatively diffuse market of competing strangers a few billion dollars can direct the market "forces" to attain planned ends without the institution of an overt monopoly. This trick is the essence of all stock manipulations, the control of large corporations by minority stockholders, etc. Equal and randomly opposing forces cancel each other out while a marginal but relatively more organized force can ultimately determine the situation.

The rapidly changing housing patterns in dozens of U.S. cities reveals the effectiveness of this type of state planning. In the last decade the production and reproduction space of this country has been completely transformed with almost no open, concrete governmental action: no highways dividing ghettos from the rest of town, no housing projects, no bulldozers to sit down in front of. This method of planning through the market is not so "precise" as the detailed state plan of the U.S.S.R. but it has the asset of appearing not to be a plan at all. Thus the state has the *advantage* of not offering itself as a *target* of resistence in an area where its police powers are vulnerable: where people live.

Surely capital does not have "it all planned" in some conspiritorial and foolproof pattern. Those are the dreams of total defeat. On the contrary, capitalist planning has many defects:
1) plans presume control of the future but the class struggle is not pre-determinable;
2) planners may have conflicting interests and may try to impose contradictory plans;
3) temporal pressure may cause the plans to be technically inadequate;
4) "exogenous" natural events may disrupt plans.
But the primary and essential failure of planning is the one remaining "anarchy of production": the unplanned desires of working class struggle.

Class struggle, however, is not only the principal disruption of capitalist planning, it is its ultimate cause as well. Planning is needed as capital attempts to continually reorganize the production/reproduction process in ever more "round-about" spatial and temporal arrangements to escape *and* incorporate working class resistence to work. The future *will not* be like the past--this capital knows--and so the future mut be controlled because the present has an essential element of indeterminacy. Thus, the need to plan inner city housing patterns escalated as urban blacks rejected the existing social and geographical arrangement by literally burning it down and threatening to burn much more--capital's "downtown".

We have, in previous issues of *Midnight Notes*, discussed capital's creation and use of time. The capitalist arrangement of space is also crucially important. Capital, especially through its ability to monetarize itself, can now move at light speed to a more "hospitable" climate; but it is always interested in the minutiae of work-life patterns in any environment it decides to land on to maximize the productivity of spatial relations. The working class, on the other side, is continually attempting to subvert the capitalist planning of spatial relations and creating anti-work spaces (sometimes even in the midst of the factory). Such are the conflicting tendencies of the space war continually erupting in capitalist society.



II. Space

The differing types of state planning of U.S. and European capital have roots in their radically different relations to space. U.S. capital has internal room to move, European capital does not. This simple fact has deep consequences.

The ability to expropriate huge areas at relatively little "cost" made it possible to maintain a relatively "anarchic" planning of production. Indeed, it was essential that capital be able to use this space in order to escape class confrontation. On the other side, the very "emptiness" of North American space, due to the lack of pre-capitalist structures that could easily be turned into fixed capital, required an almost obsessional study and planning of social relations, reproduction and and other aspects of the psychological organization of human behavior. "The Land Question" has always been at the center of the class struggle in the U.S. (as the American Indian and parts of the black movement have reminded us recently). For land is not only the repository of potential wealth but it allows for *motion*, it makes it possible for capital to elaborate a strategy of advance, flanking and retreat.

In England, France, Germany and other northern European countries the tendency of the working class in the last century has been toward a fixity in space. With the exception of Hitler's dream of "spacifying" Europe, the class "deal" which helps ensure for capital a more stable work force demands in return a less mobile capital. As a result, the institution of social democracy has an articulation and weight it never has had in the U.S.

In Washington, D.C. and other U.S. cities, the blacks since the great southern land expropriations of the 30's and 40's, have held the inner city terrain as "its own" (not in the sense of "ownership" but in the sense of "occupation"). The population density was high and the material wealth in the space was low, nonetheless, this space provided terrain for organization of power--bars, corners, churches, stoops, lots, streets, kitchens. A common politics and struggle could emerge out of this commonality of terrain. At first, this massification in a specific space was clearly functional to the place blacks were to occupy in the division of labor in the post-WW II economy, but then this concentration reached critical levels and became dangerous. As the black struggle turned from demonstrations to riots to armed struggle in a space adjacent to high concentrations of capital something had to give, "spatial deconcentration" was clearly called for.

The Zurich struggle is the reverse. Here a new interest, a new cultural/reproductive sector developed but has had no space for itself. For the struggle in Zurich is not a "housing struggle" at all but a struggle for a space *empty of capital*. The problem is not an absolute lack of housing but the lack (or better, the refusal to allow) a type of housing that could generate an anti-work space. The power of this movement and its threat arises from the *location* of its desired anti-work space: at the center of the monetary center of world capital, not in the Alps but near

the computer nodes and telephone systems that form the intricate circuits so essential to the light speed of capitalist circulation. Though there is no gold in the streets of Zurich, it lies buried in tunnels afew feet beneath the rioters.

U.S. capital was faced in the 1960's with a similar problematic that Swiss capital must confront now. Not only with respect to the black ghetto adjacent to the Federal governmental center, but with respect to the white youth "demonstration culture" whose tactics were quite similar to the contemporary Swiss "icebreakers". Capital, thus, had to destroy both the black struggle and the "counter-cultural" anti-war rebellion.

Washington, D.C. was the perfect city to plan this campaign because it was born as a city to thwart revolution. The wide boulevards of the downtown area were designed to prevent and crush a proletarian revolt in the early nineteenth century Napoleanic city planning style. It was a huge construction of "defensible space" built always with the idea of cavalry maneuvers. As the "home" of the state it demands meticulous planning and police "housework" particularly in any period of intense struggle. The whole place is bugged and crawling with agents from every repressive department of the government. (This was graphically revealed to the movement during the Chicago 8 trial in 1969. Far more evidence came from wiretaps in D.C. than from anywhere else even though D.C. was not the "home base" of any of the defendants and the "scene of the crime" was 1000 miles away!)

After the M.L. King riots in 1968 the state deliberately let the ghetto stay burnt down at some cost to its international "image". This was the first step in its slowly evolving "deconcentration" policy towards the blacks.

During that period mass demonstrations of largely white youth against the Vietnam war continually filled the city. For example, there were mass "trashings" in November of '69 and huge demonstrations after the massacres at Kent State and Jackson State. But what really disturbed the government were the Mayday demonstrations of 1971. They were organized with the express purpose of paralyzing and "shutting the city down" by blocking commuter traffic on the highways going into the city. These demos hit a nerve and the veil of "civil liberties" tore. The state responded with literal concentration camps where thousands of demonstrators were kept "illegally". This was also the year of Attica and the violent liquidation of many black militants.

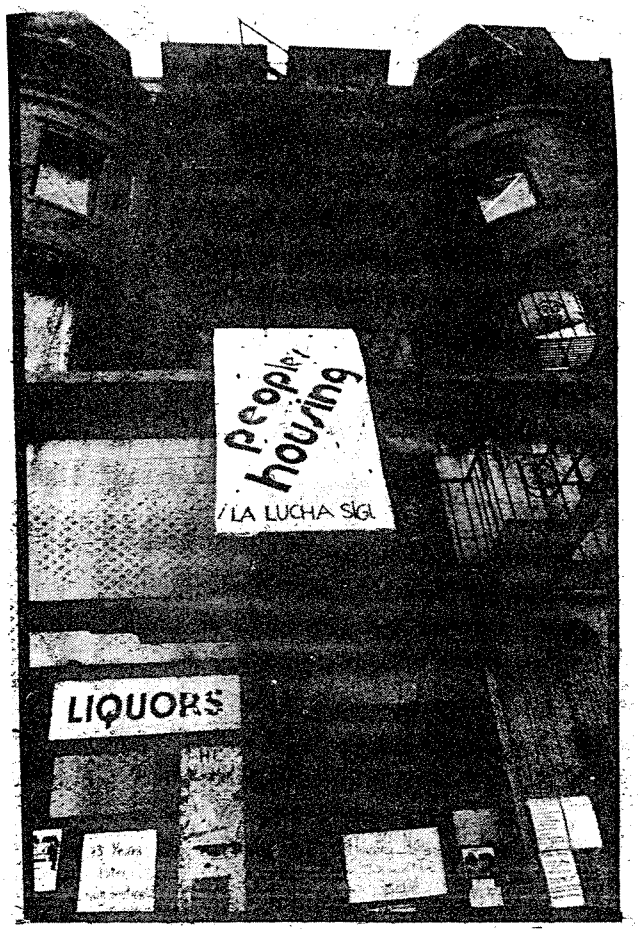


photo by Bette Keva

This physical repression paved the way for the "oil crisis" and the "politics of scarcity". In D.C. a housing "shortage" developed that appeared to give objective necessity to the increase of rents. The "free market" began to displace the remnants of the youth movement most easily, for after all they were more mobile than blacks. Some "heads" straightened up and became entrepreneurs with shops and condo developments but most simply moved on or altered their life style (from "communal" to "family" to "single") . The blacks and their struggle remained.

Ironically, capital echoed the black struggle to "escape the ghetto" but in its own key: "Go, but go when and where we say." Even the tactic of arson, so potently used in the black urban riots was turned against them by real estate operators who used fire to drive black tenants and squatters from the now "valuable property". In response, but also continuous with the previous struggles for spatial autonomy, many blacks are now defending the "ghetto". For a ghetto can be a source of strength if it is not a place that keeps you *in* but one that keeps your enemy *out*.

III. Race space: high & low

The displacement and spatial deconcentration of blacks is being accomplished through the money form. As Mayor Koch of N.Y.C. says, "Everyone should live where they can *afford* to live." But what determines affordability? Surely there exists a hierarchy of wages, and inasmuch as blacks and other "minorities" (immigrant or native) are unable to assume the full range of positions in this hierarchy but are forced overwhelmingly to occupy the bottom of the wage ladder, then they have a qualitatively different relationship to this hierarchy. This wage hierarchy gets mapped point for point into the layout of a city, while changes in the hierarchy lead immediately to spatial changes.

In the late 60's and early 70's blacks sought to open up the full range of the wage ladder and thus eliminate the particular qualitative relation they had to it. The state responded with "anti-discrimination laws" and "affirmative action programs" and for a brief period real gains were made. Study of wage distribution in that period would show an increasing homogenation of wages as well as their average increase. But the crisis of the 70's largely erased these gains with one important new twist. Wages within the working class as a whole have become increasingly dispersed, but this is true among blacks as well. This has showed up in the significant expansion of a black "middle class" of corporate and governmental bureaucrats and well-waged workers who were to provide "leadership" to an ever larger and increasingly poor black working class.

The Miami riots of 1980 revealed the bankruptcy of this "leadership" since the "community leaders" were largely ignored by the rioters. But these riots also revealed the increasing subtlety and power of this ability to use wage heirarchy to organize space in a way that would limit and repress struggle. Throughout the 70's the black ghetto in Miami was increasingly isolated from the "downtown" and "hotel" strip by buffer zones of Cuban immigrants and poorer whites. Thus this riot was not a "commodity riot" like many of the 60's but was bottled up and became a "people riot". While the Miami riot did not explode into a black versus white versus Hispanic race war, the potential for one has been exacerbated through the capitalist strategy of crisis in general and its mediation in spatial composition.

Space, then, is not only the geographic organization of capital and the working class--communities, ethnic neighborhoods; plant locations; transportation networks, etc.--but also the reflection of the heirarchical relations within the working class as well. Further, it is deployed in a quasi-military manner for the class struggle *is a war* and the mere physical arrangement of the "armies" is crucial. Thus, an important aspect of the spatial deconcentration policy is that the removal of blacks from the urban center will lead to their disaggregation. They will be spread out in the white suburbs or isolated in micro-ghettos in white worker enclaves at the edges of the city proper. This disaggregation will make them increasingly vulnerable to KKK-style terror and intimidation.

As long as blacks, hispanics and the "new immigrants" are kept at the bottom of the wage heirarchy there will be little choice. Macro-ghetto, mini-ghetto or "integration"? None of these "choices" is a solution so long as blacks and other people of color do not have the power to define their own desires and needs and have the space to realize them. This lack of choice has its historical base in slavery and Jim Crow for the blacks, but the existence of the wage heirarchy that lies behind it is no historical accident.

Though a racial and sexual identification of specific types of work with given "races" and sexes aids in capitalist control it is not absolutely necessary. Surely one can imagine a capitalist society where blacks are on the top and whites on the bottom. But a capitalist society without a wage heirarchy is impossible for capital must organize the division of labors and skills and must *recognize* the different quantities of capital invested or, better, incarnated in persons. The hierarchy of wages arises from this simple principle of capitalist "justice". Capital finds the qualitative dimension of systematically infusing different amounts of value in different workers based on the workers' permanent bodily characteristics to be an enormously useful tool of control over the working class as a whole by complexifying and intesifying the reproduction of the hierarchy.

The international flows of capital, the control of immigration, the social stereotyping that identifies work with self, all indicate the deep value capital places on an ethnic, racial and sexual hierarchy. The mechanism through which this hierarchy is produced

is simplicity itself. If certain "job slots" are reserved only for a specific type of person (incorporating a given type of capital) then less competition exists for those "slots". If black workers are systematically excluded from these better paying jobs then whites do not have to compete with blacks for those jobs, meaning that any particular white has a better chance of "rising" on the wage ladder. The most visible example of this mechanism is in South Africa; the operational principle is no different though many times more subtle and diffuse in the U.S.

The drive of blacks to shatter the racial hierarchy has met a good deal of white resistance (as well as some white support). But aside from the open racists and anti-racists, there are many whites who claim simultaneously to support equality of individuals and reject any demands for reparations in any form. Their line goes something like this: "Slavery and Jim Crow were wrong, but they don't exist any more and neither I nor my ancestors were here when they did." This has been a mass sentiment in the crisis, a "reverse discrimination" equality that is not racism per se but rather a profound capitulation to capitalist double-think. For if a white man refuses the "guilt" of historical oppression he must not then claim the rewards gained from that oppression as the products of his own, individual qualities. For example, if a white student has attained a piece of knowledge that is salable as a commodity, that knowledge is not a quality of the student but a product of the accumulated wealth generated by the class struggles of the past. Though the student might not be responsible for exploitation in the past, neither is he "guilty" of creating the knowledge, tools, and experience that arose from the exploitation.

The capitalist system, however, encourages each individual to believe these attributes are due to his or her own efforts, and that one is rewarded (paid) solely for these attributes. In a period when the most powerful form of productive force is the accumulated knowledge of past generations stretching back perhaps a million years, we are seeing a revival of "I made it to the top on my own merits" thinking!

Thus when white workers refuse to support or actively resist the demand of black workers for higher wages they accept the racism that is an essential part of the capitalist hierarchy of labor powers. Clearly, then, many white workers do have concrete reasons to support the perpetuation of blacks as an "underclass". The price they pay for their racism is very high and obvious, for it allows capital to undercut their wage struggle by continually threatening them with the use of black, lower paid labor. So why does racism continue? People are not stupid and it doesn't take a genius to see the "costs" as well as the "benefits" of racism. Do the "benefits" out weigh the "costs" for white workers? No. If computed in a hypothetical, economic calculus, anti-racism is certainly a better maximizing strategy. So why don't whites follow their "reason"?

The answer to this lies in a deeper place: every worker knows that a serious class unity would so undermine the exploitative relations that capital must act violently to preserve itself. Such a unity would have the most serious of life and death consequences and it is fear of these consequences that keeps many from acting. To destroy the hierarchy of labor powers is to literally step out of the system of "costs and benefits" and open up entirely new possibilities. Many refuse to take the risk that can't be measured. Thus, though racism and sexism as well is the basis for keeping all wages lower--for the hierarchy starts at the bottom with the unwaged--it continues. On the other side, class unity is the primary weapon the working class can wield against capital and so any revolutionary action must address the *materiality* of the labor hierarchy.

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